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THANK YOU, HIGH COMMISSIONER NICHOLAS

NATIONALS BID FAREWELL TO HIS EXCELLENCY GARVIN NICHOLAS AFTER A SUCCESSFUL THREE YEAR TENURE

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FAREWELL MESSAGE FROM THE HIGH COMMISSIONER HIS EXCELLENCY, GARVIN NICHOLAS

My dear Nationals of Trinidad and Tobago,

It is certainly with a tinge of sadness that I write this, my final note to my Nationals as High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom, and Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Denmark, Finland, Germany, Norway and Sweden. After three and a half memorable years, the time has come for me to lay down my hat and return home to Trinidad and Tobago.

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas,
High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

The British historian Thomas Carlyle said, "The true past departs not, no truth or goodness realized by man ever dies, or can die; but all is still here, and, recognised or not, lives and works through endless change". This is a statement which deeply resonates with me. I truly feel that we must never fear the evolution of time, but must focus on leaving a legacy of good works. One must continuously strive to give, to make a positive difference, rather than to take away. I arrive at the culmination of my tenure with my heart full, knowing that I have truly given my all, and hopefully elevated the stature of the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission and our Diaspora.

I am leaving with the knowledge that together, our Mission and our Nationals have achieved exceptional heights over the years. We have advanced the profile of Trinidad and Tobago with our various cultural events and trade and investment initiatives, we have shown the world the beauty of our country and ingenuity of our people. In particular, as I reflect on my time as High Commissioner, my heart truly swells with pride at the thought of the profound connections I have forged with both my staff and my dear members of the Trinidad and Tobago Diaspora. The relationships I have forged with you all have become invaluable parts of my life. I would like to thank you all for allowing me the comfort of a strong sense of family away from home.

There have been countless moments throughout my tenure which have made me immeasurably proud to represent Trinidad and Tobago. The Trinidad and Tobago Cultural Village in 2012 was a tremendous success and a worthy celebration of our nation's 50th anniversary of Independence. We capitalised on the mass of international visitors who converged on London for the Summer Olympics and exposed our extraordinary culture to a wide new audience. This was the first major event our Mission organised while I was at the helm, and I believe it set a precedent for a high standard in the promotion of Trinidad and Tobago on a global stage.

I have dedicated my energy to cultivating lasting relations with the international community to best promote the interests of Trinidad and Tobago. I am proud of the key role Trinidad and Tobago has played in the Commonwealth during my tenure, particularly in the Commonwealth Ministerial Action Group (CMAG), and the Commonwealth Foundation. In 2013, the diplomatic community took note of my efforts and named me Diplomat of the Year from the Americas. Receiving this prestigious award from Diplomat Magazine was a deeply humbling experience. This award is indeed a validation of our entire Mission's dedication to service and is a testament to the hard work of my staff and the goodwill we have created within the international sphere.

Every year, our High Commission hosted numerous events which celebrated our rich and diverse cultural festivals, such as Eid, Divali, Indian Arrival Day and Emancipation. This year though, I wanted to celebrate a festival which is so integral to the makeup of Trinbagonians – the Greatest Show on Earth, Carnival.

On Sunday 2nd March, 2014, Trinidad and Tobago nationals and friends from all over the world came together to attend the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission's inaugural All-Inclusive Carnival Fete. The All-Inclusive Carnival Fete was a tremendous success which truly exceeded our wildest expectations.

Words cannot express the great surge of national pride which swept through The Roof Gardens in Kensington, London that Carnival Sunday. We celebrated our culture with an euphoria that was incredible to behold, and the sense of unity exuded by the crowd was palpable. This was truly one of the best events I have ever attended,

made so much more special by the support of you, the Nationals.

Our All-Inclusive Carnival Fete has certainly raised the profile of Trinidad and Tobago in the UK and has elicited a powerful sense of national pride from our Diaspora.

I feel quite blessed that I will be leaving office with this sentiment of brotherhood and national fervour fresh in my mind. As we look to the future, it is my sincere hope that the relations between the Mission and our Diaspora remain strong. I have always maintained that our Mission's primary objective is to serve our Nationals, regardless of personal belief or political affiliation. Above all, we are Trinbagonians. In this rapidly evolving world, we must ensure that we all stand united and work together to see our dreams for our beloved nation come to fruition.

The poet Anatole France said, "All changes, even the most longed for, have their melancholy; for what we leave behind us is a part of ourselves". While I am looking forward to returning home and facing the new challenges ahead, there is no doubt that the relationships I have fostered as High Commissioner have left an indelible mark on me. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to all of you – my treasured Nationals and outstanding staff of the Mission. You have all made my experience in London deeply fulfilling, and your assistance throughout the years has certainly contributed in great part to the success of my tenure.

I would also like to take this opportunity to thank my family for their unwavering support throughout my time as High Commissioner. My wife, Dr. Nicola Alcala, and my son Alexei have truly been pillars of strength for me. Without a doubt, as I navigated the maze of international diplomacy, the comfort and stability of family was paramount.

I have no doubt that our Mission will continue to grow from strength to strength. From my family to yours, I wish you all the very best in your endeavours and hope that you continue to make our country proud.

May God bless you, and may He continue to bless our Nation.

Yours Truly,

H.E. Garvin Nicholas
High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom

NEW YEAR'S MESSAGE FROM H.E. ANTHONY CARMONA S.C., PRESIDENT OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

Make 2014 a year to remember, for all the right reasons.

This was the New Year's message from President Anthony Carmona, who called on the nation to come together to make the year one that citizens can be proud of.

The arrival of the New Year, he said, is a time of great promise, and the opportunity for a new beginning must not be wasted.

"In the year past, we may have experienced mixed levels of success in our personal lives and in our interactions with others, but that should not colour our expectations for the coming year," said Carmona.

His Excellency Anthony Carmona S.C., President of Trinidad and Tobago

"Reflecting on what was and, at times, what could have been, is expected but that must not be the only focus for the New Year.

He said we should look ahead to the future to determine what we can do to make a positive difference in the lives of all citizens.

"Let our words, deeds, and actions speak affirmatively and give a genuine voice to our shared humanity. It is easy to speak of love and peace but without compassion, respect, forgiveness and tolerance, these sentiments are hollow," said Carmona.

"We have to take up the mantle of responsibility to be a better people, to do right to all manner of men and women, to let good sense and goodwill prevail," he concluded.

http://www.trinidadexpress.com/news/Carmona-Make-2014--a-year-to-remember-238313901.html

THE HONOURABLE KAMLA PERSAD-BISSESSAR, PRIME MINISTER OF TRINIDAD AND TOABGO MOURNS THE PASSING OF FORMER PRESIDENT, HIS EXCELLENCY ARTHUR N.R. ROBINSON

The Prime Minister signs the condolence book for His Excellency Arthur N.R. Robinson, TC, OCC, SC, Former President and Prime Minister of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

Delivered 9th April, 2014

"We have lost one of our nation's outstanding sons"

It was with deep sadness that I learned of the passing of former President and Prime Minister, His Excellency Arthur NR Robinson this morning. He was 87.

Mr Robinson was one of our nation's outstanding sons and an Elder Statesman. He was my friend and political mentor.

I started my political career under his guidance when I became an Alderman in the then St Patrick County Council. It was with his blessing that I fought my first election in 1991. During that time in particular, Mr Robinson taught me valuable lessons which I must say are partly responsible for where I am today.

Mr Robinson remains the only son of the soil to have held the posts of Chairman of the Tobago House of Assembly, Prime Minister, and President.

As Prime Minister, Mr Robinson faced some of the most intense economic, social and security challenges in our nation's history, but he bravely took the tough decisions required at that time and even as his Government came under attack by armed insurgents, was prepared to courageously lay down his life for his country, when he commanded the army to "attack with full force".

As President, he stood as an exemplary Head of State, even when faced with declining health, and served with distinction.

As a true national hero, he earned a sterling reputation as a visionary and champion of the people. Even as he battled his illnesses for many years, Mr Robinson never lost his fighting edge, and remained driven by what he believed to be just and right.

It was in fact his proposals and advocacy that led to the formation of the International Criminal Court (ICC).

Even amidst his stellar achievements and example, Mr Robinson remained loyal to his birth village, Castara, in Tobago. He was a proud son of Tobago, and it is with a sense of honour that the Crown Point International Airport in Tobago was named after him in 2011. It was an honour that he lived to see for himself.

When I visited him last month at the St Clair Medical Centre, I still held the hope that he would have recovered, as on so many previous occasions.

Though sad, however, I am happy to know that he will now be reunited with his life-time partner and best friend, his wife, the late Patricia Robinson.

As a result of Mr Robinson's passing, I have instructed the Honourable Minister of National Security to fly the national flag at half-mast during a period of national mourning.

I have also instructed the relevant Ministers to liaise with the family of Mr Robinson to prepare for a full State funeral.

Mr Robinson's passing is a deep and tragic loss for our country, but the legacy he leaves behind shall surely live on to inspire today's and tomorrow's generations.

May his soul rest in peace.

http://www.opm.gov.tt/media_centre.php?mid=5&eid=543

LOOK OUT FOR NEXT QUARTER'S ISSUE WHICH WILL FEATURE A SPECIAL TRIBUTE TO

H.E. ARTHUR N.R. ROBINSON, TC, OCC, SC, FORMER PRESIDENT AND PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

PRIME MINISTER'S VISIT TO CHINA

Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar speaks at the opening of the Trinidad and Tobago Embassy in Beijing, China
Photo: www.facebook.com/KamlaPersadBissessar

The Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, SC, Prime Minister of Trinidad and Tobago, left on Thursday 20th February for an Official Visit to the People's Republic of China.

The Prime Minister led a delegation which comprised the Hon Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Hon Vasant Barath, Minister of Trade, Industry and Investments, and the Hon Kevin Ramnarine, Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs.

Over the last few years, Trinidad and Tobago's regional leadership in trade has been tremendously strengthened. In particular, the relationship with the People's Republic of China has proved to be very mutually beneficial for our citizens, and our respective economies.

The focus on relations between Trinidad and Tobago and China was highlighted when Trinidad and Tobago hosted the first visit of a Chinese President to the English-speaking Caribbean. This took place over the period May 31 to June 01, 2013. The Official Visit to China, took place during the period of February 23-28, 2014 and was the first time in almost 30 years that the Head of Government of Trinidad and Tobago has journeyed to a country with which Trinidad and Tobago shares a vibrant and continuously expanding trade relationship.

The Prime Minister's visit coincided with the celebration of the 40th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. In 1974, Trinidad and Tobago was a leading supporter of the "One China Policy" as articulated by the Government of the People's Republic of China.

Significantly, during the Prime Minister's visit, she officially opened the Embassy of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in China.

There were several items on the bilateral agenda. Not only did the Prime Minister have the opportunity to engage in one-on-one discussions with her Chinese counterpart, but she will also reviewed the Bilateral Relationship between Trinidad and Tobago and China, which was placed high on the agenda.

A number of other proposals for deepening the bilateral relationship between the two countries were introduced for further deliberation and these are related to:

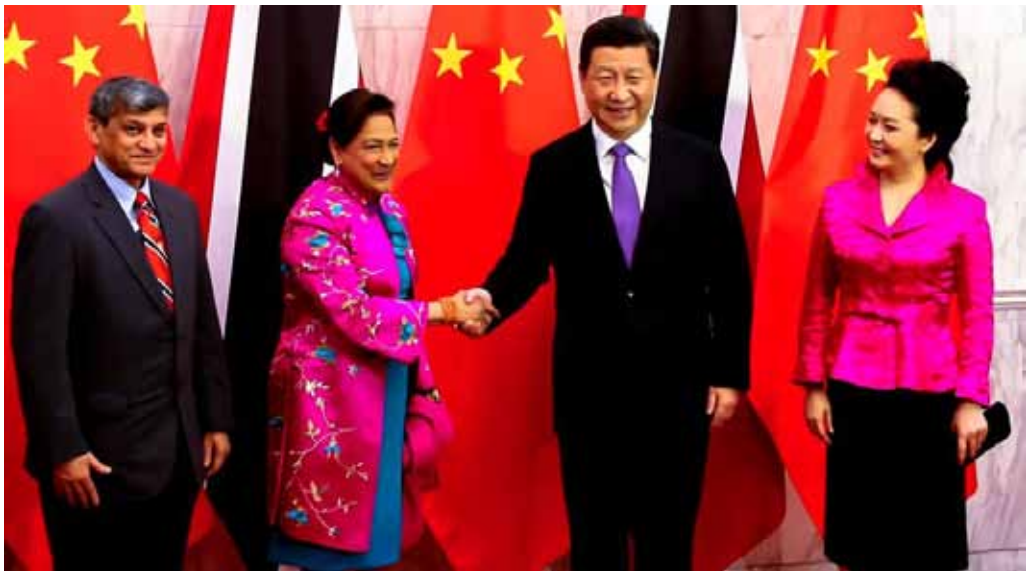
- Trade and Economic Cooperation
- Energy Cooperation
- Tourism
- Infrastructural Development
- Cooperation in Security
- Technical and Cultural Cooperation

The Prime Minister's wider delegation included local business representatives from invesTT, the UDeCOTT, the University of the West Indies,

the National Gas Company of Trinidad and Tobago (NGC), and members of the state and private media houses. These representatives had the opportunity to participate in interactive sessions with leading trade and investment officials, and in so doing be able to analyze and consider, on the ground, not only what opportunities exist, but how they can be taken forward to clear the path for increased bilateral relations.

Bilateral discussions between the the Governments of the Republic of Trinidad and the People's Republic of China yielded productive results, including the following outcomes and agreements:

- Two major projects to be financed by the Chinese Government, including the construction of six (6) new economic zones across Trinidad and the development of a transhipment port and dry-docking facilities in La Brea;
- Conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding between the General Administration of Sport of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Sport of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago for Cooperation in the Field of Sport;
- Conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Governments of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago and the People's Republic of China concerning Cooperation in Energy and Energy-Related Matters;
- Conclusion of a Memorandum of Understanding, on behalf of the Ministry of Transport, with the Civil Aviation Administration of China, with a view to a full Air Service Agreement being concluded at a later date;
- Proposal to acquire long range vessels from the People's Republic of China to aid in crime iterdiction exercises in Trinidad and Tobago.



Top: *Opening of Trinidad & Tobago Embassy Beijing – The Honourable Kevin Ramnarine, Minister of Energy and Energy Affairs; Senator the Honourable Vasant Bharath, Minister of Trade, Industry and Foreign Affairs; His Excellency Chandranath Singh, Ambassador to Beijing, China; Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar; the Honourable Zhong Shan Vice Minister of Commerce, China; the Honourable Winston Dookeran, Minister of Foreign Affairs.* ***Bottom:*** *Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar SC, and her husband, Dr. Gregory Bissessar, were guests of Chinese President, Xi Jingping, and First Lady, Peng Liyuan, at a banquet dinner at the State Guest House in Beijing on Wednesday night.* **Photo: www.facebook.com/KamlaPersadBissessar**

children's Life Fund

For more information on The Children's Life Fund please visit *www.clfa.org.tt*

The Fund was Created and established in November 2010 by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago, the Children's Life Fund's aegis is to provide urgent relief for children, assisting those who live in the shadow of disease and illness. The Fund has also received support from the renewed charity medical Schriners Children's Hospital. In addition, all Cabinet Ministers and Members of Parliament contribute 5% of their salary to the Fund.

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NEWS FROM THE MISSION

SPEECH GIVEN BY H.E. GARVIN NICHOLAS ON THE IMPERATIVE OF DEVELOPMENT AS A HUMAN RIGHT IN THE COMMONWEALTH

DELIVERED AT FAREWELL DINNER HOSTED BY THE HIGH COMMISSION OF SRI LANKA

Excellencies, Colleagues and Friends.

I wish to first of all thank Chris for giving me the opportunity to address you this evening, in what may possibly be my last speech on the Commonwealth, at least as High Commissioner.

I would also like to recognise the considerable effort that Sri Lanka put into making the Colombo CHOGM a success in the most trying of circumstances.

Trinidad and Tobago wishes you well in your role as Chair.

Albert Einstein stated: "All that is valuable in human society depends upon the opportunity for development accorded the individual."

Permit me, therefore, to leave you with a few thoughts on the imperative of development as a fundamental human right in the Commonwealth.

The adoption of the UN Declaration on the Right to Development in December 1986, some 38 years after the adoption of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, marked an important step in the discourse on human rights.

Recognising the multifaceted approach needed for development, the Declaration, in the very first Article, proclaimed that "the right to development is an inalienable human right by virtue of which every human person and all peoples are entitled to participate in, contribute to, and enjoy economic, social, cultural and political development, in which all human rights and fundamental freedoms can be fully realized."

Essentially stating that development is the rock on which we can build all other human rights.

After its adoption, this "right to development" was affirmed in subsequent United Nations declarations and resolutions such as:

- The 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development which states that, "The right to development must be fulfilled so as to equitably meet developmental and environmental needs of present and future generations";
- The Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of 1993, in which all UN Member States, by consensus, reaffirmed the right to development, as a universal and inalienable right and an integral part of fundamental human rights; and
- The 2000 United Nations Millennium Declaration, in which UN Member countries "committed to making the right to development a reality for everyone and to freeing the entire human race from want".

On the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration in 2011, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki Moon noted that while a lot had been achieved with regard to development, there remained considerable work to be done to produce the meaningful change needed.

The High Commissioner for Human Rights echoed this call, noting that while the debate regarding the relevance of the right to development rages on, approximately "842 million people do not have enough to eat, [and] 1.7 billion [have] no access to clean water."

Most recently, we had the pleasure of a visit by Helen Clark, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, who reminded us of the importance of development and reiterated the fact that there can be no development without education, healthcare and the empowerment of women.

So where does the Commonwealth sit in this framework?

In examining the trajectory of the Commonwealth with regard to development as a human right, one can see, to some extent, the imperative of development woven into the core principles and commitments of the organization.

From the 1995 Millbrook Commonwealth Action Programme on the Harare Declaration, which saw the Commonwealth as "a source of help in promoting development and literacy and in eradicating poverty" to the 2007 Kampala Declaration on Transforming Societies to Achieve Political, Economic and Human Development, it is clear that development has been seen as one of the core principles of the Commonwealth.

The Aso Rock Commonwealth Declaration on Development and Democracy of 2003 even elaborates on the critical role of women, education and health in the development of any society. Notably, Heads affirmed that "education

[was] the highest priority to the Commonwealth", given its central role in development.

Many of the Commonwealth Declarations over the years have made a clarion call for the Commonwealth to play a meaningful role in advancing global development objectives and in protecting the human rights of its constituents.

But to what extent has this translated into tangible and practicable outcomes for the peoples of the Commonwealth?

There is little doubt that the Commonwealth, through the Secretariat, the Commonwealth Foundation and other associate organisations, has done important work in advancing its goals of democracy, sustainable development, human rights, rule of law and good governance. The Commonwealth has demonstrated experience in capacity building and technical cooperation, with particular focus on Small States which make up almost two thirds of its membership. Notably, the Commonwealth plays a leading role in the advancement of the small states agenda and has made important strides on that front.

It is also useful to note that the Ministerial Meetings, the largest being the Commonwealth Education Ministers Meeting, offer a useful platform for inter-governmental consultation and decision-making and help in moving Commonwealth commitments closer to implementation.

In spite of the successes of the Commonwealth, the lack of prominence of the organisation on the ground, the lack of awareness of the work of the Commonwealth and the increasing questions about its relevance in our modern day context all point to the fact that the Commonwealth has, to some extent, failed its citizenry.

When the Commonwealth marked its 60th anniversary as an organisation in 2009, many still only knew of its existence by virtue of the Commonwealth Games and Commonwealth Scholarships. Others viewed, and indeed continue to view, the organisation as a colonial relic, serving no real purpose in multilateral fora.

Thus, while the membership of the Commonwealth has grown, with a few countries waiting in line to join, its international clout continues to be diluted and its purpose largely misunderstood.

The Eminent Persons Group report at least allowed the organisation to hold a mirror to its face and recognise that, while there were many positives within the Commonwealth, a lot needed to be changed within the organisation for it to be truly compatible today.

Friends, Colleagues,

For me, one thing remains lacking, and that is, how the Commonwealth orients itself with respect to development. As a body, we are evidently not doing as much as we can to secure the future of the generations to come.

The last biennium was an important one for the Commonwealth. The historic adoption of the Commonwealth Charter, the development of a new Strategic Plan as well as the 2013 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Sri Lanka were all important opportunities for the Commonwealth to re-orient its thinking and chart a new course toward a people-centred approach to development.

The People's Forum made that clear!

With global debate centred on the post-2015 development agenda, the Commonwealth needs to ensure that it remains seized of opportunities to contribute to such debate and to align its work with broader global development objectives.

Under the theme of last CHOGM, "Growth with Equity: Inclusive Development", leaders had the opportunity to discuss the gamut of developmental issues which affect much of the Commonwealth such as, social protection, employment, education, health, international trade and climate change.

Education is undoubtedly a key driver of inclusive and sustainable development. UN Reports on the progress of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) show that, while there has been important progress made towards the attainment of universal primary education, there still remains considerable work to be done in education, particularly in early childhood education and in non-formal and lifelong learning.

Furthermore, according to a 2013 UNESCO Institute of Statistics report, 59 million primary school aged children are still out of school, mainly in developing countries; there is no doubt that a notable percentage of that figure can be attributed to children in the Commonwealth.

As such, although education has formed a part of the discussions in successive CHOGMs and other Commonwealth meetings, it is important that, in the context of Rio+20 and the post-2015 development framework, education be seen as the launch pad for achieving many of the goals set by the Commonwealth and the wider international community.

Notably, the Commonwealth has articulated its perspective on the Post-2015 Development Framework for Education, which outlines three main goals for education: access, quality and equity. The effort of the Commonwealth Education Ministers must be commended in this respect.

The importance of health in any discourse on inclusive development cannot be overstated. As the deadline for the MDGs looms, many countries within the Commonwealth are still struggling to achieve some of the health targets set out therein. Moving beyond the MDGs, there is recognition that the post-2015 development agenda regarding health has to include a wider range of health targets, particularly with regard to non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and mental health.

At the Port-of-Spain CHOGM in 2009, Heads of Government galvanised international discourse and action on NCDs after adopting the Statement on Commonwealth Action to Combat Non-Communicable Diseases. It is therefore important that the Commonwealth continues to seek opportunities to build on the considerable work undertaken since 2009.

The Commonwealth must add its voice to the debate on health, in a strong and meaningful way.

With regard to gender, equality still remains a challenge in many parts of the Commonwealth. Thus, the outcomes of the 10th Women's Affairs Ministers Meeting, which called for, inter alia, increased financing for women entrepreneurs and strengthened systems to enhance the representation of women in political decision-making at all levels, must be implemented.

The Harare Commonwealth Declaration of 1991 declares that the Commonwealth "is uniquely placed to serve as a model and a catalyst for new forms of cooperation to all in the spirit of the Charter of the United Nations."

This begs the question: Are we truly serving as a model?

At a time where development features extensively on the global agenda, is the Commonwealth being seen as a catalytic agent for new forms of cooperation on the development front?

Where are we serving as catalysts?

The Declaration on the Right to Development, in Articles 3.3 and 8.1, indicates that:

- 3.3. "States have the duty to co-operate with each other in ensuring development and eliminating obstacles to development. States should realize their rights and fulfil their duties in such a manner as to promote a new international economic order based on sovereign equality, interdependence, mutual interest and co-operation among all States, as well as to encourage the observance and realization of human rights.

- 8.1. States should undertake, at the national level, all necessary measures for the realization of the right to development and shall ensure, inter alia, equality of opportunity for all in their access to basic resources, education, health services, food, housing, employment and the fair distribution of income. Effective measures should be undertaken to ensure that women have an active role in the development process. Appropriate economic and social reforms should be carried out with a view to eradicating all social injustices".

Therefore, calling for development should not, and dare I say, does not, bring with it an expectation that developed countries within the Commonwealth simply pour out more and more development aid to the lesser developed countries of the Commonwealth while they stand, cap in hand, waiting expectantly for redemption.

The call for development should instead serve as a reminder that in each and every one of our countries, there are individuals - men, women, girls and boys - who remain dispossessed, not solely of possessions, but also of a clear vision of their future. They are detached from the realisation that they deserve the right to be architects of their own lives, their communities and their countries.

The MDG process taught us important lessons:

- There needs to be a decreased focus on numbers and statistics. Instead, policy-makers, governments and all stakeholders need to adopt a more qualitative approach to development objectives.

- Secondly, there needs to be buy in at the grass roots level. Individuals must therefore be empowered to participate in the protection and promotion of their rights, which includes a fundamental right to development. A top-down approach should not be used as we go forward.

As we edge closer to 2015, the Commonwealth should be seen to be doing more.

Our focus on key social development pillars such as education, health and gender parity should not appear to be shrinking. BUT unfortunately, that is exactly what is happening.

Even as we fought to ensure prominence of these agenda items in the strategic plan, they have been emasculated in the dead of night and confined to mere skeleton arguments largely because of the influence of our big brothers.

Development assistance has become a mechanism for bi-lateral control, not just influence, and as such it has hijacked the multi-lateral agenda even when it forms the very core of the organisation.

This is totally out of sync with the will of the people of the Commonwealth. We must not sit back and allow that to happen!!

Colleagues,

In closing, I wish to echo the sentiments expressed by the UN Secretary-General who stated: "Now is the time to invest in development. We must invest in people, especially women and youth. They make up more than two thirds of the global population. But they have more than numbers. Women and youth have the ability and energy to drive progress."

Let us not appear to be sleepwalking, just as the dawn of a new development era approaches. As a paradigm shift occurs with the sunset of the MDGs and the dawn of the post-2015 framework, the Commonwealth has a unique opportunity to demonstrate its relevance and importance as an intergovernmental organisation working in development, to its 2 billion constituents and to the international community as a whole.

I repeat: Now is the time to invest in development.

Thank you.

H.E. Garvin Nicholas
High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago

HIGH COMMISSION FOR SRI LANKA HONOURS H.E. NICHOLAS

On Monday 24th March, Sri Lankan High Commissioner to the UK, His Excellency Dr. Chris Nonis, held a grand dinner to bid farewell to his Commonwealth colleague, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, an event which was attended by various Commonwealth High Commissioners and representatives of Commonwealth organisations.

Below are snapshots from an evening which celebrated the strengthened bonds H.E. Nicholas has helped to forge within the Commonwealth.

T&T MOVES CLOSER TO VISA-FREE TRAVEL WITH EUROPEAN UNION

14th December 2013

The Permanent Representatives (COREPER II) on December 13, 2013 in Brussels has agreed to add 19 countries to the EU visa-free list. The EU Council will now enter into negotiations with the European Parliament, with a view to the final adoption of the decision early next year.

"Our today's agreement is a significant step towards the future visa-free travel between the European Union and the 19 third countries. The Presidency strongly believe in the benefits of the visa-free travels and is very glad to have achieved the agreement among the Member States," said Ambassador Raimundas Karoblis, Chair of the Permanent Representatives Committee.

Citizens of 16 Caribbean and Pacific countries - Dominica, Grenada, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Palau, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Trinidad and Tobago, Tuvalu, Vanuatu - as well as United Arab Emirates, Peru and Colombia will be able to travel without visas once the amendments of the Regulation listing the third countries whose nationals must be in possession of visas when crossing the external borders of Member States and those whose nationals are exempt from that requirement, will be adopted by the EU Council and the European Parliament.

To benefit from the visa-free travels, each of the 19 countries will still have to conclude a bilateral Visa Waiver Agreement with the European Union. Lithuania has put a major emphasis on the EU visa policy during its Presidency to the Council of the EU in the second half of 2013. The EU-Azerbaijan Visa Facilitation Agreement has been signed at the Vilnius Eastern Partnership Summit on November 29, the decisions on the conclusion of the EU-Armenia Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements have been adopted, paving the way for their entering into force from January 1, 2014.

The Lithuanian Presidency has also reached an agreement on the negotiating mandate for the European Commission to start the Visa Facilitation talks with Morocco, the first such agreement in the EU's Southern neighbourhood.

http://www.eu2013.lt/en/news/pressreleases/lithuanian-presidency-reaches-agreement-on-visa-free-travel-for-citizens-of-19-countries

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** Promotion period is valid only for transactions sent until 1st November 2014 at retail locations to the Caribbean only. See at agent location for promotional terms and conditions.
1_UK_Caribbean_Trinidad&Tobago_print_170x350mm.indd 1 3/26/14 11:55 AM

TRINBAGONIAN WAR HEROES HONOURED ON COMMONWEALTH DAY

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas presents the wreath commemomrating Trinidad and Tobago's World War I and II servicemen

On a clear spring morning, High Commissioner Garvin Nicholas represented Trinidad and Tobago as scores of representatives from various High Commissions, governmental and military associations in the United Kingdom came together at the Memorial Gates in Constitutional Hill, London to participate in the annual Commonwealth Day Commemoration Ceremony.

The Ceremony took place on Monday 10th March and brought together these dignitaries of the Commonwealth to celebrate the memory of the brave men and women who left their countries to fight for Britain in the two world wars.

The Memorial Gates commemorate the contribution and sacrifice of men and women from India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Sri Lanka, as well as Africa and the Caribbean, in the First and Second World Wars.

They also celebrate the contribution that these men and women and their descendants, members of the Commonwealth family, continue to make to the rich diversity of British society.

As part of the procession of Commonwealth High Commissioners, H.E. Nicholas laid a commemorative wreath at the base of the Memorial Gates, a gesture which paid tribute to the hundreds of servicemen from Trinidad and Tobago who risked their lives in the pursuit of global peace and justice.

TOURISM AND TRAVEL STAKEHOLDERS WELCOME LONG-AWAITED UK AIR PASSENGER DUTY REFORM

The long-standing dispute between the Caribbean and the United Kingdom which centred on the highly contentious Air Passenger Duty (APD) tax has advanced significantly with a welcome outcome for both the Caribbean and the UK travel industry. On Wednesday 19th March, UK Chancellor George Osborne announced a change to the APD banding rules so that all long-haul flights will now carry the same tax as a flight to the United States.

H.E. Nicholas chairs a meeting of the CARICOM High Commissioners

High Commissioner Garvin Nicholas has waged a tireless battle against what was deemed a discriminatory tax, which saw flights from the UK to the Caribbean being taxed at a higher rate than flights to other destinations such as Hawaii in the United States, despite the distance between the UK and the Caribbean being considerably shorter. Both UK and Caribbean travel and tourism stakeholders have bemoaned the APD increase, and in 2012 the Travel Trend Report of the UK Office for National Statistics showed that the number of business trips to the Caribbean had been halved, from 34,000 visits in 2011 to 18,000 in 2012.

H.E. Nicholas has lobbied various UK parliamentary members to address the inequity of the APD increase throughout his tenure, particularly via the Trinidad and Tobago All-Party Parliamentary Group, which he set up to seek Trinidad and Tobago's interests within the UK Parliament.

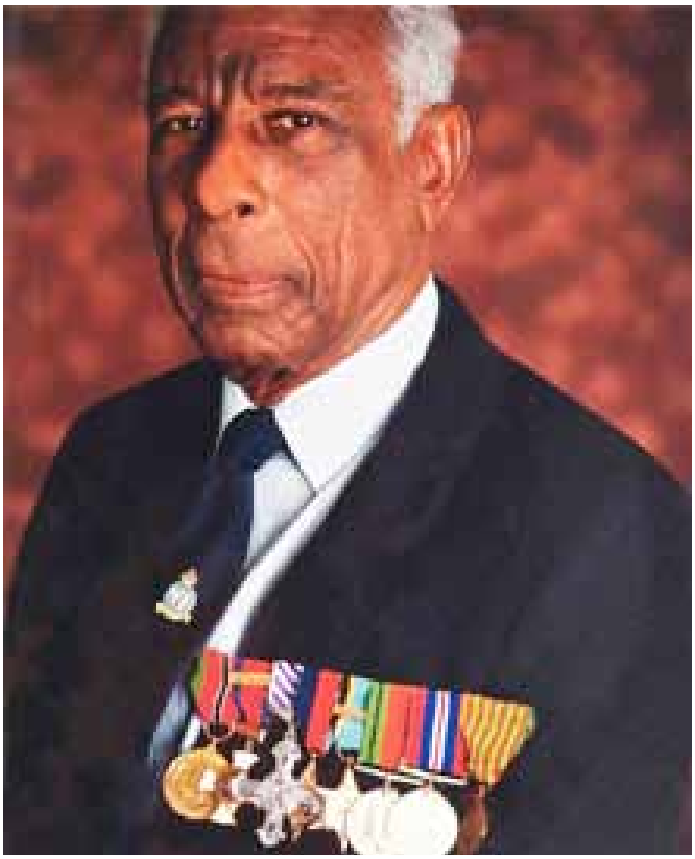
H.E. Nicholas also partnered with several other Caribbean High Commissioners to contest the increase, and a significant turning point in their battle occurred at the 2013 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in Sri Lanka when the High Commissioners successfully put the APD issue on the Commonwealth agenda. This led to a promise from British Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, William Hague to CARICOM Foreign Ministers and High Commissioners to address the matter in this year's Budget.

Flights from the UK to the Caribbean will now be taxed at £240 instead of £300, on par with flights to the United States. H.E. Nicholas has long criticized the debilitating influence of the APD on the Caribbean's tourism-dependent economy, as well as its corrosive effect on the Visiting Friends and Relatives (VFR) travel market, resulting in a loss of passengers from the Caribbean Diaspora.

The High Commissioner praised the hard work of his colleagues, the Diaspora and his allies in the UK Parliament. "This is indeed a major achievement not only for our Caribbean travel and tourism industry, but for diplomatic relations between the United Kingdom and the Caribbean", he remarked. "The UK has continuously spoken of reaching out to other markets and contributing to trade and economic activity, and of its respect for the Caribbean as Commonwealth partners. Today, the Parliament has really proven that the interests of the Caribbean do matter, and I applaud the representatives for making a change towards equity and fair play. The APD continues to be a deterrent to international tourism and trade, and it is my hope that the UK Government will soon examine further reduction or abolition of this tax".

TRIBUTE TO JUSTICE ULRIC CROSS

Addressing a packed St Peter's Church in London, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas issued a call for a new generation of role models of the calibre of the late Justice Ulric Cross ORTT, CM, DSO, DFC. The occasion was the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission's Tribute to Justice Cross which took place on Saturday 8th February.

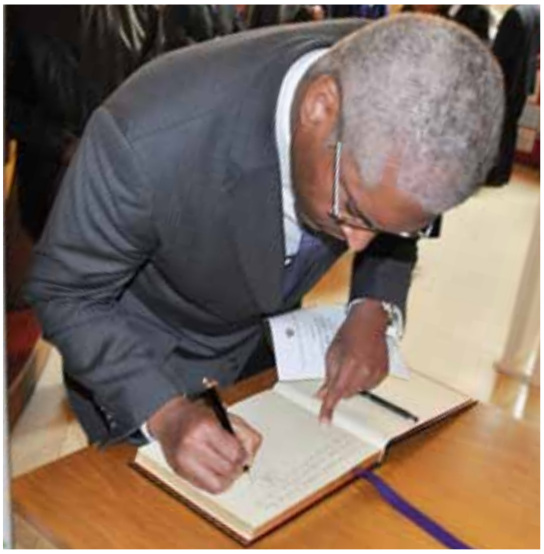


Justice Ulric Cross

In recounting Justice Cross' legacy as a true hero and patriot, H.E. Nicholas called for citizens of Trinidad and Tobago to emulate Cross' sense of honour, commitment to service, loyalty to his country and drive to help his fellow man. "Justice Ulric Cross was a man who not only served Trinidad and Tobago tirelessly, but dedicated his existence to the preservation of justice and democracy on an international scale," the High Commissioner declared. "His was a distinguished life, a life very well lived. Now more than ever, our society dearly needs role models like Justice Ulric Cross".

H.E. Nicholas emphasised his appeal for his countrymen to follow Cross' stellar example and strive towards positive national advancement. "May his memory serve to motivate us all to go above and beyond as he did, and to lead lives which will be models of courage and honour for future generations".

Justice Cross was renowned in the United Kingdom as one of the most decorated West Indian squadron leaders of World War II. In addition to his positions as a Judge, Chairman of the Law Reform Commission of Trinidad and Tobago, and Chairman of the Commonwealth Foundation, Justice Cross served as High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago in London from 1990-1993.



H.E.. Nicholas signs the condolence book for Justice Cross;

The Tribute was attended by dignitaries such as High Commissioner for the Republic of Cameroon, His Excellency Nkwelle Ekaney, distinguished servicemen of the Royal Air Force, members of the legal community, and close friends and family members including Justice Cross' children Lady Sue Hollick, Nicola Cross and Richard Finch.

Reverend Squadron Leader Michael Chatfield spoke on behalf of the Royal Air Force, and lauded Justice Cross' bravery and leadership. He recalled Justice Cross' daring missions as a serviceman flying over 80 sorties, and praised his determination to uphold justice and equality around the world. "The Royal Air Force is deeply indebted to this great man," concluded Squadron Leader Chatfield.

Tributes were also given by the Right Honourable Lord Eatwell, President of Queens' College, Cambridge, and Ms. Lisa Forrell, Theatre Director and Lawyer, who both spoke of Justice Cross' insatiable love for life, canny wit and passion for law, as well as his loathing for corruption of any kind.

H.E. Nkwelle Ekaney, emphasised Justice Cross' invaluable contribution to the development of the justice system in post-colonial Africa, "As Attorney General for West Cameroon, Justice Cross shaped essential policies and his memory is eternally engraved in the hearts and minds of the people of Cameroon".

Justice Cross' granddaughter, The Honourable Abigail Hollick, gave a moving tribute to her beloved grandfather, making a quip about his wealth of knowledge, "Before there was Google, there was Grampa".

In her Vote of Thanks, Justice Cross' daughter Lady Sue Hollick articulated her deep gratitude to H.E. Nicholas for organising such a meaningful and memorable celebration of her father's life.

"He was a remarkable exemplar, a man who not only served Trinidad and Tobago tirelessly, but dedicated his existence to the preservation of justice and democracy on an international scale. His was a distinguished life; a life very well lived. Our society dearly needs role models like Justice Ulric Cross."

- His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago

"As Attorney General for West Cameroon, Justice Cross shaped essential policies and his memory is eternally engraved in the hearts and minds of the people of Cameroon."

- His Excellency Nkwelle Ekaney. High Commissioner for Cameroon

"What can we learn from Ulric the friend? ...to openly embrace people without prejudice, without preconception but always with humour and a delightful wonderful huge twinkle in the eye."

- Ms. Lisa Forrell

"Because cricket and politics and social change and the joy of life, all made up an interconnected force field, defining Ulric's world."

- Right Honourable Lord Eatwell

"As my sister rightly says: 'Before Google there was Grandpa.' There was nothing he didn't seem to know.... I will never forget his stories, his smile and his love of life."

- Honourable Abigail Hollick

"The Royal Air Force is deeply indebted to this great man"

- Reverend Squadron Leader Chatfield

FULL SPEECHES AVAILABLE ONLINE IN
LONDON MISSION VOL. 66 SUPPLEMENT

http://tthighcommission.co.uk/attachments/article/97/LM_vol66_supplement.pdf

1) *Flag bearers proceed through the church;* ***2)*** *Flags displayed in the church;* ***3)*** *Lady Sue Hollick delivers the Vote of Thanks;* ***4)*** *Ms. Achi-Kemba Phillips, Tourism Attaché, Master of Ceremonies;* ***5)*** *The Ebony Steelband performs during the service*

PICTURED:

1) *The High Commissioner with standard bearers and members of the Royal Air Force;*

2) *Justice Cross' daughters Nicola and Lady Sue Hollick share an embrace*

3) *Guests mingle after the Tribute at a reception hosted by the High Commission;*

4) *High Commissioner and Lady Hollick greet Baroness Floella Benjamin;*

5) *High Commissioner and Lady Hollick greet Channel 4 presenter Jon Snow.*

A CELEBRATION OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S CULTURE IN LONDON

As part of High Commissioner Garvin Nicholas' mandate to promote culture in the United Kingdom and Europe, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission brought the spirit of Carnival to London on Sunday 2nd March. The High Commissioner's brainchild, the All-Inclusive Carnival Fete, proved to be a major success.

The event, which was supported by the Trinidad and Tobago Ministry of Tourism and the Division of Community and Culture of the Tobago House of Assembly, brought Trinbagonians and other visitors from all over the UK together in a grand celebration of Trinidad and Tobago's culture.

Being thousands of miles away from home did not deter hundreds of Trinbagonian nationals from celebrating Carnival Sunday with euphoric abandon at the All-Inclusive Fete. The excitement and vibrancy of Trinidad and Tobago's culture were palpable as hundreds of patrons converged on the opulent The Roof Gardens in Kensington, London, all eager to revel in the sweet sounds of soca, steelpan and chutney music.

Top - *The High Commissioner is front and center as Shurwayne Winchester has the crowd in a waving frenzy*

Left - *His Excellency Garvin Nicholas with Shurwayne Winchester and members of the Planning Committee*

The huge crowd was in merry spirit as they danced to soca and calypso hits spun by leading Caribbean DJ, Martin J. The vibe was made even sweeter when the CSI Steel Band took to the stage and regaled the crowd with calypso classics performed on the national instrument, enticing the audience to sing along in unison. The atmosphere was further heightened when G&H Tassa Entertainments struck up their tassa drums, whipping the crowd into frenzy.

Without a doubt, the highlight of the evening was the exhilarating performance from Trinbagonian soca master and multiple Calypso, Road March and Soca Monarch, Shurwayne Winchester.

Winchester set the entire crowd afire with his electric performance, singing a range of soca and calypso hits, including his anthems "Dead or Alive" and "The Band Coming". One of the winners of the Next Tobago Star, Ronell Berkley, also thrilled the crowd with his rendition of back in times soca hits.

Chutney lovers were not left out, thoroughly enjoying Deenish Rampatap's dynamic chutney-soca session, featuring hits such as Chutney Soca Monarch Ravi B's "My wife run away" and "Bread". Throughout the evening the crowd was an ecstatic sea of waving hands clutching red, white and black Trinidad and Tobago flags. The atmosphere was truly one of unity, reflecting the best of Trinidad and Tobago Carnival.

Guests were treated to an authentic premium All-Inclusive experience, enjoying a wide range of sumptuous Trinbagonian cuisine. Patrons went back for second and third helpings of tasty dishes such as roti, accra, bake and shark, doubles, geera pork, pholourie, corn soup and pelau. Guests also had full access to several bars featuring top-shelf spirits, including Trinbagonian staples such as Angostura rums and Carib beer.

Trinidad and Tobago High Commissioner, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, expressed his pleasure at the fantastic turnout for the event and acknowledged the appreciation guests expressed to the High Commission for putting on a flawless event. "This landmark event has proved to be a major success in terms of the celebration and showcase of Trinidad and Tobago's vibrant culture," H.E. Nicholas remarked.

"Ensuring that our Diaspora maintains a strong connection to home, and introducing an international audience to Trinidad and Tobago are some of our primary objectives, objectives we have certainly achieved tonight," he stated. "I am very appreciative to the Division of Community and Culture of the Tobago House of Assembly, as well as to the Ministry of Tourism for their invaluable support in making our All-Inclusive Fete possible. I must also thank our staff members at the Mission who have done an excellent job, as well as our nationals and all of our guests for making this event one we will never forget".

__1)__ H.E. Nicholas addresses the attendees; __2)__ H.E. Nicholas with Ms. Achi-Kemba Phillips, Tourism Attaché (right), Ms. Bianca Beddoe, Communications Officer (left) and Mrs. Beverley Awonaya, Public Affairs Officer; __3)__ Ronell Berkley, winner of the Next Tobago Star; __4)__ Conga line!; __5)__ Guests having a ball; __6)__ Councillor Judy Best with Shurwayne Winchester; __7)__ H.E. Nicholas with producer Lisa Wickham, Ambassador for Trinidad and Tobago to the United States His Excellency Dr. Neil Parsan and Shurwayne Winchester; __8)__ Shurwayne gets the flags flying. __Photos: Brian Quaver__

1) *CSI Steelband delivers their rendition of Ministry of Road;* **2)** *Tassa group led by Suresh Rambaran;* **3)** *Crowd waves their flags;* **4)** *Guests enjoying Trinbagonian cuisine;* **5)** *Chutney singer Deenish Rampatap performs;* **6)** *Guests enjoying the evening;* **7)** *Guests pose for the camera;* **8)** *Ms. Josephine Learmond-Criqui and Geoffrey Ahye being served;* **(9)** *H.E. Nicholas with nationals.* ***Photos: Brian Quaver***

__1)__ H.E. Nicholas with High Commissioner for Grenada, H.E. Joslyn Whiteman and Mrs. Whiteman; __2)__ Moving to the left!; __3)__ High Commissioner for Sierra Leone, His Excellency Edward Turay and guest; __4)__ Mrs. Michelle Charles and Ms. Claudia Cupid, Trinidad and Tobago High Commission; __5)__ Mrs. Omadaye Sawh on Tassa drum; __6)__ Councillor Judy Best with Mr. David Hinkson, Immigration Attaché (Senior), and Mr. Michael Graham; __7)__ Ms. Denise Ovarall-Ramsay and friend; __8)__ Guests enjoy the music; __9)__ Ms. Majorie Rennie and friends.

Photos: Brian Quaver

A HISTORIC MASS

Trinidad and Tobago Archbishop Joseph Harris, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, Archbishop of Westminster Cardinal Vincent Nichols, Father Emmanuel Pierre

Archbishop of Port of Spain, His Grace Joseph Harris created history on Thursday 27th March when he became the first Archbishop of Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago to celebrate Mass at the Westminster Cathedral in London, United Kingdom. The Archbishop declared that he felt deeply blessed to have the opportunity to lead a Mass at Westminster, which is the mother church of the Catholic community in England and Wales and the Metropolitan Church and Cathedral of the Archbishop of Westminster.

The Historic Mass was arranged by His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom, to raise awareness of the plight of the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Port of Spain. The Mass was concelebrated by Father Emmanuel H. Pierre of the Archdiocese of Port of Spain, who addressed the congregation on the urgent need to aid critical restoration efforts for the deteriorating Cathedral. The Cathedral, which was completed in 1850, is one of Trinidad and Tobago's most significant historic, cultural and architectural landmarks and is listed as a heritage site by the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago. The Cathedral is now in dire need of restoration, and the Archdiocese of Port of Spain is now appealing to the public for support.

Trinbagonian nationals turned out in impressive numbers for the Mass. In a moving Homily which was peppered with signature Trinbagonian humour, Archbishop Harris impressed upon the congregation the importance of using the Lent season to cultivate good habits which would help them become better people. He recalled his childhood Lenten sacrifices of his beloved pone and sweetbread, noting that it was perhaps more worthwhile when people use the season to challenge themselves to actively do things to improve their character and help their fellow man. The Archbishop called on the Trinbagonian nationals in the congregation to ensure that they did good works within their communities, so that the Trinidad and Tobago Diaspora in London would become well known as a loving people.

The Archbishop of Westminster, Cardinal Vincent Nichols was in attendance and also addressed the congregation. Cardinal Nichols expressed that he was greatly pleased to host Archbishop Harris and to support the restoration of Trinidad's Mother Church. The Archbishop also thanked High Commissioner Nicholas for making the Mass possible, and wished the people of Trinidad and Tobago well with their continued efforts to restore their Mother Church.

* Donations to the Archbishop's Appeal can be made at any bank within Trinidad and Tobago.

International Bank drafts and cheques can be sent to the address below:

The Archbishop's Appeal
27 Maraval Road,
Queen's Park West
Port of Spain,
Trinidad and Tobago

Tel: **1-868-622-2691**
Email: **appealfund@rcpos.org**
www.appealtnt.org

__1)__ Archbishop Harris leads the Mass; __2)__ HC Nicholas delivers a reading; __3)__ Canon Metivier delivers a reading; __4)__ Croydon SDA Gosepl Choir; __5)__ TTHC Communications Officer Bianca Beddoe delivers a reading; __6)__ Congregation at the Mass; __7)__ Cardinal Nichols adresses the congregation; __8)__ Tenor Neil Latchman, Cecila De Maria (harp) and Tania Lisboa (cello) perform a hymn; __9)__ The High Commissioner with The Archbishop's Appeal Team, including Jennifer Lee (2nd from left) and Donella Clapperton (far right). ***Photos - Brian Quaver***

NEW ZEALAND HIGH COMMISSIONER-DESIGNATE TO TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO PAYS COURTESY CALL ON H.E. NICHOLAS

Potential areas for cooperation between Trinidad and Tobago and New Zealand were the centre of discussion when High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, received a courtesy call from the High Commissioner-designate for New Zealand to Trinidad and Tobago, Her Excellency Jan Henderson, on Thursday 20th February.

New Zealand High Commissioner-designate to Trinidad and Tobago, Her Excellency Jan Henderson with H.E. Garvin Nicholas

H.E. Henderson will be leading the first New Zealand High Commission physically located in the Caribbean region and brings with her vast experience inclusive of her last posting in New Delhi.

During the very cordial meeting, H.E. Nicholas highlighted the need for countries within the Caribbean to move away from traditional fields and explore new opportunities for development and investment.

Recognising the potential for increased cooperation between the Caribbean Region and New Zealand, the High Commissioners agreed that possible opportunities existed in areas such as disaster preparedness, agriculture, aquaculture, eco-tourism, sports and education.

While the High Commission for New Zealand will be based in Bridgetown, Barbados, H.E. Nicholas also encouraged the High Commissioner-designate to visit Trinidad and Tobago particularly during the Carnival season, as this would provide her with an ideal opportunity to experience first-hand Trinidad and Tobago's main tourism product.

H.E. Nicholas congratulated H.E. Henderson on her appointment, noting that the opening of the first physical New Zealand Mission in the Caribbean represented an important step in deepening relations between the Caribbean and New Zealand. He assured H.E. Henderson that Trinidad and Tobago would remain seized of the opportunity to strengthen relations between both countries and looked forward to working with her.

LONDON MISSION WELCOMES NEW FINANCIAL ATTACHE

Ms. Esther Millette, Financial Attaché

Ms. Esther Millette, a Public Servant with over twenty-four years experience, has joined the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London as Financial Attaché. The staff of the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London warmly welcomes Ms. Millette to the team.

THE HIGH COMMISSION BIDS FAREWELL TO MS. WENDY AUSTIN

In early February, the High Commission said goodbye to Ms. Wendy-Ann Austin, former Financial Attaché, who retired from the Public Service. We extend best wishes to her on her retirement.

EYE ON TRADE

T&T DIASPORA PROFESSIONALS MEETING

Meeting attendees partake in the evening's exercises

by **MRS. CANDICE LATCHMAN**

The first Trinidad and Tobago Diaspora Professionals Meeting for 2014 was held at the High Commission on Wednesday 19th February, 2014.

This meeting focused on identifying project/s for collaboration either to benefit the UK-based Trinidad and Tobago Diaspora or a worthwhile cause in Trinidad and Tobago or both. The attendees were divided into two groups and a brainstorming session ensued.

The groups put forth their suggestions in two (2) fifteen- minute blocks. At the end of the brainstorming, each member was invited to individually identify the project/s which they believed most likely to succeed/fail.

Furthermore they were each asked to identify the project/s which they would personally be willing to support. The projects that were identified for focus for 2014 include :

- An internship programme between UK and Trinidad and Tobago
- Developing an online platform to share ideas and knowledge among the group members.
- Collaborating on cultural development workshops
- Promoting a reverse brain-drain strategy by exposing the opportunities available in Trinidad and Tobago to the UK Diaspora.

These ideas will be presented at the next TT Diaspora Professionals' Meeting to be held on Tuesday 29th April 2014 at 19:30 at the High Commission.

T&T GETS STANDARD AND POOR'S 'A' RATING

Standard and Poor's has given Trinidad and Tobago A ratings, confirming the strength of the economy.

Finance Minister Larry Howai said the international ratings agency confirmed Trinidad and Tobago's "A" long-term and "A1" short-term sovereign credit ratings.

Howai said Standard and Poor's had also given the country a transfer and convertibility assessment of "AA" as far as it relates to things like foreign currency.

He said these ratings were given on the basis that Trinidad and Tobago continued to be characterised by strong external reserves amounting to approximately 12 months of import cover and sustainable debt levels.

He said this was buttressed by the strong reserves held in the Heritage and Stabilisation Fund which has crossed the US$5 billion mark.

Howai said, however, that since energy revenues contributed approximately 45 per cent of gross domestic product, diversification continued to be a priority of the Government.

Howai said Standard and Poor's sees the rate of economic growth at between 2.5 per cent to three per cent in GDP over the coming years. He said GDP per capita is expected to rise to 2.6 per cent in 2014.

Asked about concerns within the business community that the economy was not going as it should, Howai said some businesses may feel the impact of competition, which is increasingly global.

He said the number of people ordering products online was growing.

He said: "What is happening is apart from the continuing opening of new stores, that the growth in online purchases will be more and more a matter of competition and concern for businesses in Trinidad and Tobago because you can quite easily order most things over the Internet directly from the manufacturer, original distributor or wholesaler.

"The gradual evolution of the retail trade is going to create challenges which our local businesses would have to consider how they are going to meet with that, because the competition is no longer just the store next door, it is becoming Macy's and Walmart and other stores outside of Trinidad and Tobago."

http://www.trinidadexpress.com/business/TT-gets-Standard-and-Poors-A-rating-242851491.html

T&T HIGH COMMISSION FACILITATES invesTT MEETINGS

by **MRS. CANDICE LATCHMAN**

On the afternoon of January 22nd and on January 24th - 25th 2014, the Trade and Business Division of the High Commission hosted several meetings between invesTT, the Investment Promotion Agency of Trinidad and Tobago and members of the Diaspora as well as the UK business community. Mr Sekou Alleyne, Investor Sourcing Manager, was in London to attend the Finance and Investment London Forum where he delivered a presentation on the data centre opportunities in Trinidad and Tobago.

Mr Alleyne took the opportunity to meet with several individuals interested in doing business with Trinidad and Tobago. Various projects and avenues for collaboration were discussed. The projects focused on the sectors targeted for investment including: the Creative Industry, ICT, Financial Services, Agriculture and Tourism.

The meetings proved fruitful and Mr Alleyne agreed to facilitate the progress of these projects by connecting the proposers with the relevant organizations in Trinidad and Tobago.

APRIL 2014

FOREIGN EXCHANGE RATES
INTEREST RATES

CURRENCY	BUYING	SELLING	CASH
Great British Pound	10.4265	10.6501	9.78000
United States Dollar	6..3957	6.4665	6.10000
European Euro	8.4861	8.947	8.17000
Canadian Dollar	5.9159	6.2215	5.67000

Interest Rates (%): 25 Mar 2014	
Discount Rate	4.75
Special Deposit Rate	0
Repo Rate	2.75
Prime Lending Rate	7.5
Overnight Interbank	0.25

Information based on Central Bank of Trinidad and Tobago figures at time of print

http://www.central-bank.org.tt

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July 2 - 5, 2014

Centre of Excellence, Macoya, Trinidad and Tobago

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Find New Markets & Suppliers at TIC 2014!
The Region's Biggest Business-to-Business Event!

Biggest Business-to-Business Event

The region's biggest business-to-business event is back at the Centre of Excellence, Macoya and better than ever! Hosted by the Trinidad and Tobago Manufacturers' Association (TTMA), TIC is sponsored by Telecommunications Services of Trinidad & Tobago (TSTT), Ministry of Trade, Industry & Investment (MTII), and First Citizens. The Trade and Investment Convention provides a unique forum where local, regional and international exhibitors showcase thousands of products to qualified buyers seeking new goods and services.

Contact the TIC Secretariat for further details or to book your booth now!!

Email: ticsales@ttma.com or ticbuyers@ttma.com
Tel: (868) 675-8862 ext. 247 | Fax: (868) 675-9000

Register now! www.tic-tt.com

TSTT mtii First Citizens TTMA

CONSULAR + STUDENT SERVICES

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE

High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to London, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, was honoured to present the Eric Williams CAPE History Prize to Miss Ann Sara Ramkissoon on Monday 24th February, 2014.

The award was presented on behalf of the Eric Williams Memorial Collection and the Caribbean Examinations Council.

A prerequisite for consideration is the attainment of Grade Ones in CAPE History units one and two. Miss Ramkissoon, a past student of Naparima Girls' High School, achieved outstanding results at the CAPE. She also received the award for the Most Outstanding Candidate in Modern Languages, and achieved Grade I in eight Units: Caribbean Studies, Communication Studies, French Units 1 and 2, Spanish Units 1 and 2, and History Units 1 and 2.

H.E. Nicholas commended Miss Ramkissoon for her achievement, remarking, "The diligence and discipline Ms. Ramkissoon has displayed makes her a true role model for her peers. I am confident that Ms. Ramkissoon will be a future leader in her field and will positively influence the local and international communities".

The High Commissioner lauded the Government of Trinidad and Tobago's commitment to the advancement of young people. "Our present Prime Minister, the Honourable Kamla Persad-Bissessar, has consistently emphasised the importance of education and healthcare for our young people, noting that they are the foundation for the future of our nation...the reality is that an uneducated nation will perish, and education has become a basic right in today's world".

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__1)__ The High Commissioner congratulates Ms. Ann Sara Ramkissoon; __2)__ High Commissioner presents Ms. Ramkissoon with her certificate; __3)__ 2nd Secretary Ms. Keisha Rochford-Hawkins addresses the audience; __4)__ Ms. Ramkissoon gives her Vote of Thanks

JOIN US AS WE CELEBRATE

Tobago Heritage Festival

TWENTY-FOURTEEN

MID JULY - AUG. 1ST

Community Treasures: Revelations

Presented by: The Division of Community Development and Culture
A Division in the Tobago House of Assembly
email: tobagoheritagefestival@yahoo.com
website: tobagoheritagefestival.com
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TOBAGO HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY
POLE MEIOR EVENIT

TOBAGO HERITAGE FESTIVAL
She Becomes More Beautiful

CULTURE + TOURISM

T&T HIGH COMMISSIONER THANKED FOR HIS CONTRIBUTION TO PAN AND CULTURE IN THE UK

Gerald Forsyth, OBE; son of Grafton Yearwood; Toussaint Clarke; Dudley Dickson; H.E. Garvin Nicholas; UKPTG Chairman Robbie Joseph; Frank Rollock and Tony Charles. ***Photos - Kevin Joseph***

It came as a complete shock to His Excellency Garvin Nicholas when he was presented with a most thoughtful gift from the Pan Tuners Guild, made by veteran pan tuner Dudley Dickson in recognition of his efforts in promoting and assisting the pan community in the United Kingdom.

The occasion was the UK Pan Tuners Guild Awards Ceremony which was hosted by the High Commissioner on Friday 31st January.

The members of the Guild expressed their gratitude to H.E. Nicholas for his support of their work with the presentation of a one of a kind miniature steel pan, specially designed with a unique covering which would allow the instrument to also be used as an ornate coffee table.

"H.E. Nicholas has been a staunch advocate for the promotion of the steel pan during his tenure as High Commissioner," declared Mr. Robbie Joseph, Guild Chairman. "We are deeply appreciative of his support and his commitment to the advancement of Trinbagonian culture in the UK".

H.E. Nicholas thanked the Guild members and praised them for their significant contribution to the art form. "Every time you produce and sell our national instrument, you extend the reach of our cultural heritage. The new owner becomes interwoven in the rich tapestry that is Trinidad and Tobago," declared the High Commissioner. "Organisations such as the UK Pan Tuners Guild are valuable resources which not only contribute to the enhancement of pan production but introduce new generations to an instrument forged from a rich and colourful history".

Mr. Joseph lauded the achievements of the night's awardees, remarking that the group included the inventors of the Collapsible Folding Stand and the Octopan, impresarios who performed and produced steel pans for schools, steelbands and shops all over the world, educators who introduced steel pan to the curriculum of many British schools, and innovators whose formation of early steelbands led to the development of West Indian style Carnivals in the UK.

Awards were presented to Mr. Tony Charles, Mr. Toussaint Clarke, Mr. Dudley Dickson, Mr. Gerald Forsyth, OBE, Mr. Frank Rollock, Mr. Grafton Yearwood and Mr. Aubrey Bryan, all founding members of the UK Pan Tuners Guild.

H.E. Nicholas pledged his continued support to the organisations and individuals involved in the development of steel pan, and called for greater recognition to be given to the potential of the instrument to galvanise community spirit and national pride. "In societies all around the world we see a deplorable lack of community, young people who are disillusioned and are easy prey for undesirable elements," he stated.

"But we must not forget how the steel pan was born. It was out of similar communities that young men coalesced around the birth of the steel pan. It is time that we reenergise our efforts to involve our young people in the playing and tuning of the steel pan, not just in Trinidad and Tobago, but the world".

see
PROFILES OF THE AWARDEES
on page 38

CULTURE & TOURISM

SHADES OF CARNIVAL – SATURNALIA AWARDS

Guests including the Lord Mayor, H.E. Garvin Nicholas, and Councillor Dr. Denise Tsoiafatt-Angus, Secretary of Community Development and Culture, Tobago House of Assembly, enjoy the proceedings.

by **DEBORA DE GAZON**

On Friday 13th December 2013, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission hosted the London Notting Hill Carnival Enterprises Trust (LNHCET) and Shades of Carnival gala celebration, Saturnalia.

The presentation celebrated artistic and non artistic excellence by honouring Trinidad and Tobago nationals and others who have contributed to the development of the London Notting Hill Carnival.

The historical celebratory evening, the first of its kind for more than 20 years, was also attended by the Mayor and Mayoress of the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea.

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas expressed his pleasure to not have only opened the premiere of Shades of Carnival in July 2013, but also to be a part of its end of season celebrations for 2013. "After having the privilege of witnessing the opening of "Shades of Carnival", I am confident that this programme has great potential to become an important tool in advancing the unique cultural brand of Trinidad and Tobago," he stated. "The rich cultural capital of our country is highlighted in our Carnival, which is revered the world over for its artistry and revelry. Thus, programmes such as "Shades of Carnival" can play a major role in connecting Trinidad and Tobago and the West Indies to new audiences in a way which promotes understanding of our culture and enhanced knowledge sharing".

The Tobago House of Assembly Secretary for Community Development and Culture Councillor, Dr. Denise Tsoi-A-Fatt Angus, detailed the value of Carnival to Caribbean people and those from other cultures. She highlighted the eminent impact aspects of Tobago's rich cultural heritage has on the shaping of carnival. It was also noted that Tobagonians such as Calypso Rose, Shadow, Johnny King, Prince Unique, Shurwayne Winchester, Tobago Crusoe and others have made significant contributions to the development of Carnival nationally and internationally.

Among the honourees were Calypso artists Orthniel Bacchus aka Tobago Crusoe and Winston Albert aka D'Alberto, who received Lifetime Achievement Awards. Pioneers Mr. Sterling Betancourt MBE, Mr. Russel Henderson OBE and Mrs. Elma Betancourt were also honoured for their outstanding contribution to the development of the Notting Hill Carnival.

The night's entertainment included energetic performances from UK Groovy and Power Soca Monarch, Triniboi Joocie and veteran artiste Alexander D' Great. The audience was also captivated by a high-powered Samba dance piece by Britain's Got Talent 2012 semi finalists, Dance Flavourz International.

To culminate the formal part of the evening Councillor Dr. Tsoi-A-Fatt Angus and the Tobago Director for Culture Ms. Glenda Rose Layne distributed thank you gifts to the organisers, the Mayor and Mayoress, the Trinidad and Tobago High Commissioner and Lifetime Achievement Award recipients. The Individuals recognised were Mrs. Debora Alleyne De Gazon (Artistic Director of LNHCET and Creative Director of Creative Learning Circuit); Ms. Teishel Joefield (young ambassador from Creative Learning Circuit); Ms. Yves St. Amer (Founder and Director of Bohemian Entertainment UK) and Mr. Lekan Olujimni (Director of The Klub International Management).

The final part of the evening was a socialising moment with a fabulous reception of wine and edibles compliments of Bohemian Entertainment UK, as well as a mixture of calypso, soca parang, laughter and chat with waves of enthusiasm which flooded the room as many asked what's in store for 2014. Without a doubt the evening was a success, one of great community spirit which left a lasting memory in the minds of many.

SPOTLIGHT ON UK-BASED SOCA ARTISTE: KONATA ALLEYNE

If you're a young Trinbagonian living in the UK, you're sure to have Konata Alleyne on your radar. This young man has lit up major stages in London including the UK Soca Monarch and 2012's massive cultural fair, The World on Regent Street.

Konata's passion for music extends beyond soca and calypso, and his tunes are also flavoured with reggae and pop beats. Whatever the genre, Konata performs with signature Trinbagonian flair. The thirty-year old artiste is on a mission to showcase his talent to the world, and with the 2013 launch of his own entertainment company, One Island Music, he is well on his way.

Check out our conversation with Konata below and get familiar with this rising music man!

You've been involved in music since you were a young boy at Queen's Royal College. What or who encouraged your passion?

I do not think there was any one person or event that encouraged me. My parents who bought me my first trumpet, teachers, and friends who encouraged me just to name a few.

You were originally studying for a degree in Physics at home. What made you decide to dedicate yourself to music and move to London?

I have always been dedicated to music. I originally wanted to understand the engineering side of the equipment used to create and amplify sound. But after some time in UWI my vision got more defined and I realised that I wanted to focus more on the management side of things. I chose London because it is one of the art hubs of the world, alongside Los Angeles and Paris.

What has been the most challenging aspect of gaining recognition as a musical artiste?

My fundamental goal is not to gain recognition but to unlock the music that I have inside of me and really create something that translates to the masses. This is in itself the difficult journey that creative people/minds must travel . I believe 'recognition' is a side effect of achieving this.

Trinbagonians are often accused of having "crab in barrel" syndrome. How supportive has the Diaspora been as you've worked to establish yourself?

The diaspora has always been supportive of me. But I believe that it is something that you need to earn. You cannot expect people to support you without giving them a real reason to. So it means I have to keep on creating quality music and giving fans and supporters my all when I perform.

Although you're based in London, you maintain significant links with Trinidad via your successful J'ouvert band, Dirty Dozen. How did the idea for DD come about?

My family and I always wanted to do a J'ouvert band. One J'ouvert morning we were heading to a band and realised that we had about

80 friends and family in tow. We were like…"We might as well start our own band". The rest as they say, is history.

What has been the proudest moment of your career so far?

Hmmm… it will have to be creating a music video for my track 'This Is The Life' by using just two iPhone 5's. People still can't believe it was done like that.

Which artiste (any genre) would be your dream collaborator?

I would love to collaborate with Bruno Mars! I think he is a great artiste. And I feel there is a similarity in style.

What are you aiming to achieve with One Island Music?

One Island is a lifestyle brand whose goal is to make Caribbean lifestyle accessible in Europe through music. Accessibility is so important for any product and it is not different for music. Accessibility though quality, accessibility through imagery and accessibility through knowledge.

You're well acquainted with both – how does Notting Hill Carnival in the UK compare to Trinidad and Tobago's Carnival?

Notting Hill inherently shares similarities with Trinidad Carnival but has developed and evolved into its own being that reflects the region, its people and its diverse history. With that being said I get as excited with the approach of Notting Hill as I do with Trinidad Carnival! I love the energy and the excitement. Trinidad is still the Mecca but Notting Hill has its own unrivalled prowess.

What do you miss most about London when you're in Trinidad and Tobago, and vice versa?

Even though I am not one to miss 'things', I do miss the food in Trinidad for sure…the energy of the people, liming and just the overall vibe. You can't get that anywhere else in the world. But when I am in Trinidad I begin appreciating the musical and creative freedom that London gives

you. There seems to be space and acceptance for all when it comes to the arts. The Government and other bodies really support art and cultural development. There is also so much to see and do. Not to mention you have quick and easy access to Europe.

W***hat can we expect going forward from Konata Alleyne?***

I don't even know what to expect…lol. I am in a very experimental /trial and error phase of my career. What I want to do does not exist yet. So it's a matter of treading in unchartered territory. But I can tell you that it's going to be some exciting stuff OR …Music, Fashion and some serious Caribbean industry development.

This Is The Life from Konata is his international debut single. Available for download now in all digital stores.

iTunes:
https://t.co/19LyDo0ym0

Google Play
http://tinyurl.com/pq6aj2w

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TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO CARNIVAL 2014 RESULTS

PANORMA

LARGE BANDS:
Petrotrin Phase II - Jump High;
Len "Boogsie" Sharpe -
287 points

MEDIUM BANDS:
Pan Elders - Family; Duvone Stewart -
284 points

SMALL BANDS:
Supernova - In De Minor; Amrit Samaroo -
288 points

GEORGE BAILEY BAND OF THE YEAR

Trinidad All Stars Steel Orchestra:
Sailors On Shore Leave At A Tropical Fiesta -
2,365 points

CALYPSO MONARCH

Roderick "Chucky" Godron: "Wey Yuh Tink/
Wedding of de Century"

INTERNATIONAL SOCA MONARCH

POWER:
Machel Montano "Ministry of Road"

COSTUME/ MAS BAND OF THE YEAR

LARGE BAND:
Ronnie & Caro: De River Come Down

INTERNATIONAL SOCA MONARCH

GROOVY:
Kerwin Du Bois "Too Real"

Photos: news.power102fm.com, newsday.org, Nabwoods Photos, Proudfool Communications, guardian.co.tt

TOBAGO HERITAGE FESTIVAL
A GRAND CELEBRATION OF OUR CULTURE

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1) *A beautiful Bele dancer lights up the stage;* ***2)*** *African drummers create a powerful rhythm ;* ***3)*** *Dancers whirl to the beat;* ***4)*** *A drummer is spellbound by the rhythm* ***5)*** *Heating of the tambourine drums as dawn breaks.*

Photos: Mr. Troy Andrews for Tobago House of Assembly

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TOBAGO HERITAGE FESTIVAL

by **MS. GLENDA-ROSE LAYNE; DIRECTOR FOR CULTURE, DIVISION OF DIVISION OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT AND CULTURE**

The annual Tobago Heritage Festival has seen unprecedented growth since its inception in 1987 with the motto "she becomes more beautiful", as the yearly celebration continues to preserve Tobago's unique cultural heritage.

The Division of Community Development and Culture and by extension the Tobago House of Assembly continues to endorse and promote the Heritage Festival as a marquee event in Tobago's cultural calendar. The focus of the festival is placed on folkloric expressions, showcased through music, song, dance, drama, varied oral traditions, and other cultural mediums related to the island's heritage.

The theme for this year's Tobago Heritage Festival 2014 is entitled Community Treasures: Revelation, as it summons us to reveal the mystery, charm and beauty of the island's cultural practices and traditions, cradled within its respective communities. The theme also seeks to awaken the people of Tobago to cherish their heritage as a precious legacy, thus, instilling pride in the ownership of what is theirs.

This year's Heritage festival unlike previous years would be celebrated all year round, providing an opportunity for visitors and returning Tobagonians to witness and partake in some aspect of the island's heritage, almost anytime during the calendar year. Notwithstanding, from Mid-July to the first of August, would continue to observe the staging of signature events within the two (2) weeks, such as:

- The Ole Time Tobago Wedding Moriah
- The Salaka Feast at Pembroke
- Natural Treasures Day at Charlotteville
- Folk Tales and Superstitions at Les Coteaux
- The Ms. Tobago Heritage Personality
- Ole Time Tobago Carnival Plymouth/ Bethesda

One of the more recent additions to the Heritage Festival is the 'Diaspora Connections' night which attempts to connect with the spirit of a people identically diverse but artistically rich, as they come together to reflect on their auspicious heritage, from the beginning of the island's existence to present. This significant event not only provides entertainment but also educates individuals through music, song, dance, folk tales, drama, traditions and art, drawing from the experience of communities known for various ethnic traditions, as we seek to further investigate the myths and realities of their discovery, cultural practices, and development.

For the first time this year the Tobago Heritage Festival will host a three day Conference on the Arts and Cultural Industries (CACI) in the month of July. The theme of the conference is titled, 'Preserving Our Heritage and Enhancing Our Legacy', which provides a unique forum where individuals and relevant stakeholders within the arts and cultural industry sphere can engage in discourse and various approaches. Consequently, encouraging the production of tangible or intangible artistic and creative outputs that have the potential for wealth creation, in addition to systematic sustainability of cultural traditions and customs.

Furthermore, the conference aims at fostering creativity and strategic approaches that will enable synergies not only within the context of Tobago but regionally as well as internationally. As such, CACI's intent is to motivate collective actions by countries with the goal of shaping and promoting the creative sector as a driver of development.

The various sub-themes that will be incorporated into the Conference are:

- Life and Work of Dr. J.D. Elder & its Proposed Relevance Today
- Revisiting Cultural Policy in the Caribbean
- Steel Pan: Unrealized Possibilities
- Preserving the Carnival Cultural Industry
- From Story Telling to Spoken Word
- Sustainability of Visual & Performing Arts as a means of Revenue Creation
- Culture & Tourism: Untapped Realities
- Tambrin: The Indigenous Instrument of Tobago
- Youth in Arts & Cultural Industries
- Approaches Towards Protecting Our Cultural Heritage & Legacy

The conference would bring together academics, artists, musicians, entrepreneurs, persons in trade and tourism and many other applicable individuals.

So come and indulge in this captivating event known as the Tobago Heritage Festival! Join the many thousands who journey expectantly to the various villages to experience the culture, stage productions, warm hospitality of the people, culinary delights, and witness the spectacle that is Tobago Heritage!

TDC
Tourism Development Company Limited
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

TOBAGO JAZZ EXPERIENCE 2014

by **TOBAGO HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY**

The Tobago Jazz Experience (TJE) 2014 is a celebration of jazz, along with the indigenous music of Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean. Staying true to its promise of offering "much more than music" however, the Tobago Jazz Experience incorporates the cultural and historical practices that define the island of Tobago as an ideal destination.

From Saturday 19th to Sunday 27th April, 2014, visitors will embark on a musical trek through Speyside, Signal Hill, Scarborough, Castara and the Pigeon Point Heritage Park.

Visitors can indulge in the gastronomic experience that is the authentic dirt oven bread indigenous to the village of Castara; take a walk off the beaten path into the Main Ridge Reserve; immerse themselves in cultural treats such as the goat races at the Buccoo Integrated Facility; or take in a history lesson during a tour of Fort King George Heritage Park - all the while, interacting with a warm and welcoming people notorious for their vintage brand of hospitality.

Previous Jazz Experiences featured celebrity performers such as George Benson, Erykah Badu, Randy Crawford, Chaka Khan, Trey Songz, Angie Stone, Janelle Monáe and Emeli Sandé. This year, Grammy award winners John Legend, Earth Wind and Fire and Brandy along with Keyshia Cole will command the stage, supported by an impressive cast of local and regional talent.

The Tobago Jazz Experience is owned by the Division of Tourism and Transportation of the Tobago House of Assembly and it is one of the many initiatives used to increase Tobago's visibility in the local, regional and international tourism market. The annual festival presents an opportunity to promote the Tobago brand, stimulate economic activity for the Tourism Business Unit and showcase to the world everything the island has to offer.

Events include:

Saturday, April 19: Jazz in the East, Speyside Recreational Grounds

Sunday, April 20: Hillside Jazz, Signal Hill Recreational Grounds

Monday, April 21: Mt. Pleasant Sports Day, Mt. Pleasant Recreational Grounds

Tuesday, April 22: Buccoo Goat Races, Buccoo Integrated Facility

Wednesday, April 23: Jazz on the Waterfront, Milford Road Esplanade

Thursday, April 24: Northside Jazz, Castara Beach

Friday, April 25: World Music Night, Pigeon Point Heritage Park

Saturday, April 26: Youthopia, Pigeon Point Heritage Park

Sunday, April 27: Beach Jazz Fiesta, Pigeon Point Heritage Park

Patrons attending this year's Tobago Jazz Experience are promised a dynamic cast of local, regional and international acts, as well as a wide variety of mouthwatering cuisine and exciting fringe activities that will combine to create an all-encompassing festival that truly is "much more than music".

FEATURE

HEROES OF PAN IN THE UK
UK PAN TUNERS GUILD AWARDEE PROFILES

Aubrey Bryan

Aubrey 'Boss' Bryan came from Guyana in 1964 has toured Germany with the British Airways Groovers Steel Orchestra as a player and tuner and was invited to produce a complete set of instruments for a high school in West Berlin, the first of many such commissions. He was also featured in several short films about the making of pans, started a three year BSc in Social Sciences and invented the 'Octopan' - the prototype of which was exhibited in Hyde Park, London during the 'Year of the Child' – Save the Children'. Other inventions include the 'Aubrapan' which has achieved international acclaim from across Europe and the Caribbean.

Tony Charles

Mr. Charles completed several tours of Europe and the Middle East and led the resident steelband at the Savoy Hotel for many years. He has played for the Royal Family at Buckingham Palace, for Heads of States, live on BBC Test Cricket Matches, at countless Awards Dinners, Henley Regatta and the Royal Naval College. Over the past fifty years he has also made many television appearances on a wide range of programmes including 'Top of the Pops'. He is a leading authority on steel band music and a master steelpan manufacturer and tuner who supplies steel pans for schools and steelbands and shops in the UK, America and Europe.

Dudley Dickson

Mr. Dickson is the creator of the acoustic Voom Box, a plywood instrument which amplifies the sound of the seven-bass pan. This diminutive pan innovator to date has already invented the Collapsible Folding Stand, which is now used by many bands around the world, a Collapsible Stage, the Sonia Sonic Bass, in addition to making modifications to the Diagonal Tuning Tenor Pan. He has played with Birmingham All Stars, Tropicans Harmony Steelband and Melody Makers. Dickson was a facilitator at the Coventry training workshop where he was involved in pan fabricating, and trained youngsters at the Carnival Industrial Project in London. As a tuner, his workmanship has been felt in numerous steelbands and soloists around the world.

Toussaint Clarke

As well as making and tuning their pans, Mr. Clarke is a key member of Rainbow Steel Orchestra. He also participates in the London Notting Hill Carnival each summer where for the last few summers he has played in the Real Steel Orchestra where his son is the resident musical arranger. He returns to his ancestral home at least once a year to visit the Trinidad Carnival where he picks up the latest carnival arrangements of the current year's Soca and Calypso hits and disseminates them throughout the English steeband community.

Gerald Forsyth OBE

In 1964, Mr. Forsyth formed the Invaders Combo, which played regularly at the legendary Albany Pub. Under his guidance and tuition, the first school steel band was established at Islington Green School in London in 1969. This paved the way for a number of Inner London Education Authority schools to start up steel pan classes and by 1975 there were over 50 schools with steel bands. In 1978 he was appointed Steelband Organiser for Schools, and by 1990 he had over 160 schools with steel pan as part of their curriculum. In 2001, he produced his book about the lifetime journey of a pan legend in the steelband movement. He was awarded a BAS Hall of Fame honour by the British Association of Steelbands in 2005.

Frank Rollock

In 1960, Mr. Rollock was instrumental in the initiation of the Brixton Carnival. Mr. Rollock started teaching pan music at Kingsdale Secondary School, which is now one of the many South London schools which have benefited from his musical talents, and also co-founded the first ILEA School Steel Orchestra. In 1970s, he directed his family band, London All Stars, to UK's first National Steel Band Festival Championship. He co-founded the Steel Band Association of Great Britain, the London Brotherhood of Steel and the Pan Players Association. In 1981, he founded the Brixton Arts Culture and Carnival Committee, giving the wider community the opportunity to learn musical instruments and share in the Carnival heritage. He was also responsible for the co-founding of the UK National Steel Orchestra, which performed in Buckingham Palace for the Queen's Golden Jubilee in 2002.

Grafton Yearwood

In the early seventies, Mr. Yearwood's father "Biggs" was a pan tuner in England - at a time when there were very few individuals in that profession. In 1988, father and son formed the Pantonic Steel Band. In 1991, Mr. Yearwood joined forces with Dudley Dickson and the "Happy Drum" company was formed. It was from then that he began working in Switzerland with Martin Grah - one of Switzerland's steelband leaders. Mr. Yearwood continues to supply and blend pans for the Swiss market. Over the years, he has been tuner to many of the top bands in London.

THE MISSION CONGRATULATES MBE HONOREES MS. JACQUELINE GLASGOW & MR. BRENT HOLDER

On November 12th, 2013, Trinbagonian national Ms. Jacqueline Glasgow was made a Member of the British Empire in the Queen's Birthday Honours List 2013, one of the highest honours in Britain. Ms. Glasgow was honoured for services to Nursing and Healthcare. She attended the Investiture at Buckingham Palace on the 12th of November and was presented with the honour by Prince William on behalf of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

Ms. Glasgow has made an outstanding contribution to nursing in the National Health Service for over a period of 36 years. She is an exceptional leader with a track record in developing and motivating others to achieve. She has a record of innovative and creative work in service development. She has studied extensively within the health and social care field. These academic studies afforded her the ability to successfully utilise various methodological approaches within the public health arena. She has been an ambassador for both clinical and non-clinical staff and she remains a champion for the nursing/health care profession.

On October 23rd, 2013, Laventille-born Brent Holder was awarded an MBE by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth, which he collected from Prince Charles. Mr. Holder received the award for his contribution to the development of steelpan culture in the United Kingdom.

At 36, Mr. Holder is the youngest Trinbagonian to receive an MBE award. He is known worldwide, and is the winner of numerous global competitions. Mr. Holder continues to strive to share his passion and love of music with the world and educate and nurture the future stars of the pan world.

Ms. Glasgow and Mr. Holder are sterling examples of the invaluable contribution members of the Trinidad and Tobago Diaspora have made to the United Kingdom. Our Mission extends its sincere congratulations. We applaud them both and look forward to receiving more great news about our nationals' myriad achievements.

FEATURE

H.E. NICHOLAS PAYS TRIBUTE TO ONE OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO'S EXCEPTIONAL MUSICAL ICONS

by **MRS. BEVERLEY AWONAYA**

Above: *(L-R) Dr. Nicola Alcala, High Commissioner Nicholas, Neil Latchman and High Commissioner for Antigua and Barbuda, Dr. Carl Roberts.* ***Below:*** *Neil Latchman signing a copy of the 'Dedication' CD for a national.*

High Commissioner Garvin Nicholas hosted a reception at the High Commission on Wednesday 12th March 2014 to launch the CD 'Dedication' in which International opera Tenor, Neil Latchman, one of Trinidad and Tobago's cultural icon, pays tribute to his homeland Trinidad & Tobago and other countries including Cuba, Brazil, Mexico, Greece, Iran and India.

High Commissioner commented that "Trinidad and Tobago has given birth to an extraordinary wealth of talented musicians. Neil joins a long list of opera singers which includes singers such as Anne Fridal and Ronald Samm to name a few. These performers have performed around the world but have not forgotten their roots".

Neil Latchman was in the public eye from the age of five years appearing regularly on Stage, Radio and Television, including on Hazel Ward-Redman's talent competition, "Twelve and Under". His career as a child also saw him perform before Dr. Eric Williams, Indira Ghandi, Srimavo Bandaranike and Fidel Castro ,among other world leaders.

Mr. Latchman started his international career in 1997 when he was chosen as the tenor to commemorate the 20th Anniversary of the life of Maria Callas in London. He has performed for various members of The British Royal Family and at the Lord Mayor's Mansion House Residence in London on numerous occasions. He is regularly asked to sing at the opening of many world events which included the 2009 Summit of the Americas. As a classical opera Tenor, he has created history throughout the world and in Trinidad and Tobago and his performances are indelible illustrations of the country of his birth and its people.

His Excellency also urged the singers and musicians attending the event to continue to use their talent "not only to provide entertainment but to empower people. Your access to a wide international audience gives you the power to bring hope and peace through your music as you inspire your listeners to new heights of pride in self and country and fulfillment

of dreams and ambitions".

Guests on the evening included High Commissioners and other members of the diplomatic community, Baroness Howells and Lord Taylor.

H.E. NICHOLAS WELCOMES T&T RUGBY GIRLS

by **MRS. BEVERLEY AWONAYA**

His Excellency Garvin Nicholas hosted a lunch for a group of girls from Trinidad and Tobago on Wednesday 12th March 2014 at the High Commission, London.

The group of girls representing the Rainbow Sport and Cultural Club from Marabella were the guests of the **touraid** charity, a UK sports charity which aims to create long term social and economic benefits for children and young adults from communities throughout the world by connecting them with communities and schools or clubs in the UK.

The sport played by the charity is rugby. The group was accompanied by the Founder and CEO of the Rainbow Sport and Cultural Club Mr. Rudolph Jack and Mrs. Mandy Friday, carer of the girls. The charity **touraid** was represented by Natasha Sohl and Brian Feehily.

His Excellency praised the work of **touraid** and thanked the girls for representing Trinidad and Tobago so well by placing third in the matches.

High Commissioner commented that being a host to such a group of girls was a very worthwhile experience especially as it occurred during his last month as High Commissioner in the United Kingdom.

The charity, **touraid,** has reached over 950 children from 28 nations on 60 tours to the UK originating from the Caribbean to North Africa, Central Asia to the Indian

Sub-Continent and Eastern Europe to the sub-Saharan nations.

His Excellency commented that 'the positive elements of this visit will remain with the girls through their lives'. He also said that their experience will help them develop confidence and become role models to others in their schools back home.

His Excellency with members of the Rainbow Sports and Cultural Club and touraid representatives Natasha Sohl (far left) and Brian Feehily (far right), and Rainbow Sports CEO Rudolph Jack (3rd from left) and carer Mandy Friday (front)

T&T NATIONALS BENEFIT FROM FINANCIAL PLANNING FORUM

His Excellency joins the audience as they listen intently to Ms. Gutzmore's presentation on 'Taking Control of Your Family Fortune'

Nationals of Trinidad and Tobago in the United Kingdom benefited from an intensive succession planning and asset management forum when they attended the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission's Nationals Meeting on Wednesday 29th January.

High Commissioner for Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas saw the need to provide such a forum for nationals, stating that it was imperative for Trinbagonian nationals to be educated on their financial obligations and rights while living in the UK.

"There is a large generation of Trinbagonians who came to the UK years ago and have worked very hard and sacrificed a great deal to achieve financial security. It is vital that our nationals are informed of effective means of succession planning to ensure they and their loved ones can continue to live comfortably," H.E. Nicholas remarked.

Ms. Aleka Gutzmore, a Financial Executive and Mentor addressed the audience in her presentation titled "Taking Control of Your Family's Fortune". Ms. Gutzmore illustrated savvy means of financial planning, securing inheritance funds and asset protection strategies, noting the importance of implementing a Trust when establishing a Will in order to protect future generations.

Ms. Gutzmore urged the audience to make financial planning a priority. "I cannot overstate the importance of business and asset protection – it is never too early," she declared. "Many people are uninformed of certain rules and regulations and find themselves in difficult situations which could have been avoided had they or their loved ones implemented proper financial planning strategies".

The High Commissioner emphasised the importance of the information detailed in Ms. Gutzmore's presentation to members of the Diaspora. "I want to see the Trinbagonian Diaspora thrive in the United Kingdom," he stated.

"In order for our community to build a solid foundation, we must ensure that we are equipped with the competency to strengthen our finances and provide a better future for our children and grandchildren".

H.E. Nicholas concluded the meeting with a commitment to the continued advancement of the Trinbagonian Diaspora in the United Kingdom. "I am very pleased that our Mission is able to provide essential services such as this to our nationals," he stated. "We will continue to work towards the betterment of our Diaspora and the promotion of Trinidad and Tobago in the United Kingdom and beyond".

FEATURE

H.E. NICHOLAS VOWS TO CONTINUE SERVING NATIONALS OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

H.E. Nicholas illustrates a point to a member of the audience

Trinidad and Tobago High Commissioner to the UK, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, confirmed that March would be his final month in office, bringing to a close a highly successful three and a half year tenure.

He made the disclosure at the Nationals Meeting on Wednesday 26th February at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London. Nationals reacted with dismay, with many taking the opportunity to praise H.E. Nicholas for his service and support throughout the years.

"I am very happy that I have got to know this Diaspora," H.E. Nicholas responded. "The Diaspora will always be a part of me. As I go forward in life I will always strive to pursue initiatives which will benefit our Trinidad and Tobago nationals".

Nationals also expressed their appreciation to His Excellency Garvin Nicholas for providing an interactive forum in which he directly responded to their queries and concerns. The packed audience was eager for the High Commissioner's feedback on a range of issues, in particular Prime Minister Kamla Persad-Bissessar's official visit to China and the potential procurement of a long range vessel from that country.

The High Commissioner clarified the need for such a vessel to assist the Trinidad and Tobago Coast Guard's fight against illegal drug trafficking. "The vessel will meet the budgetary and technical specifications ascribed by the Government of Trinidad and Tobago," stated H.E. Nicholas. "The illegal drug trade is our number one problem; therefore aggressively tackling this issue is our Government's number one priority".

Nationals also raised the topic of tourism in Trinidad and Tobago and shared ideas on how the country's profile could be enhanced in the United Kingdom. The High Commissioner confirmed this was a prime objective of the Government. "Diversification of the economy is one of the pillars of our Government's manifesto, and we are focused on advancing our tourism industry," H.E. Nicholas remarked. He recalled the success of the 2012 Cultural Village and 2013 World on Regent Street event in London which saw thousands of UK and international visitors engage for the first time with the cultural product of Trinidad and Tobago.

The High Commissioner emphasised his commitment to developing Trinidad and Tobago's cultural brand internationally. He cited his ongoing discussions with London Mayor Boris Johnson, particularly on the possibility of hosting a major Trinidad and Tobago Carnival showcase in London. As the meeting concluded, H.E. Nicholas made it clear that pursuing the advancement of the people and products of Trinidad and Tobago would remain his fundamental objective.

UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL

29th: T&T Diaspora Professionals' Meeting
30th: Nationals' Meeting

JUNE

25th: Nationals' Meeting
TBA: T&T Diaspora Professionals' Meeting

JULY

30th: Nationals' Meeting

** Events will be added and updated to the High Commission's website:* ***www.tthighcommission.co.uk***

Make sure to register as a national either by email or in the High Commission to keep abreast of our exciting events!

HER MAJESTY'S MARSHAL OF THE DIPLOMATIC CORPS PAYS COURTESY CALL ON H.E. NICHOLAS

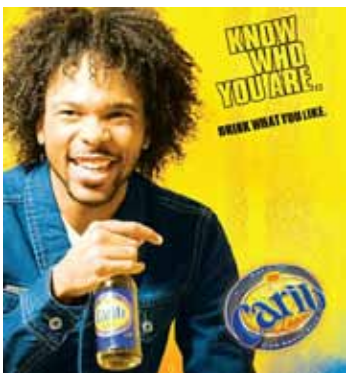
On Thursday 27th March, High Commissioner for the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago to the United Kingdom, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas. received a courtesy call from Her Majesty's Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, Mr. Alistair Harrison. As the Queen's liaison to the Heads of Mission at the Court of St. James's, Mr. Harrison extended his thanks to High Commissioner Nicholas for a job well done, saying he was sorry to see the High Commissioner leave office. He noted the High Commissioner's work within the Commonwealth and his achievements in enhancing relations between the United Kingdom and Trinidad and Tobago. High Commissioner Nicholas left office after a successful tenure at the end of March, 2014.

H.E Nicholas displays his parting gift from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II, presented by Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, Mr. Alistair Harrison

Mr. Harrison presented High Commissioner Nicholas with a gift of a signed portrait from Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Phillip, Duke of Edinburgh, expressing their appreciation for the High Commissioner's service.

Gratified by Her Majesty's acknowledgment of his efforts, High Commissioner Nicholas thanked Mr. Harrison. He shared with Mr. Harrison that the preceding afternoon he had met with His Royal Highness Prince Charles, Prince of Wales, who had expressed similar sentiments of appreciation.

The High Commissioner stated that he was pleased to have advanced T&T's agenda in the United Kingdom, and looked forward to continued strong relations between Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom.



FEATURE

H.E. NICHOLAS RECEIVES AWARD FROM T&T NATIONALS IN UK FOR EXEMPLARY LEADERSHIP

1) H.E. Nicholas address the audience; 2) H.E. Nicholas receives his award from Ms. Sue Sudama; 3) H.E. Nicholas and Dr Alcala; 4) Trinidad and Tobago Archbishop Joseph Harris, Dr. Alcala and H.E. Nicholas

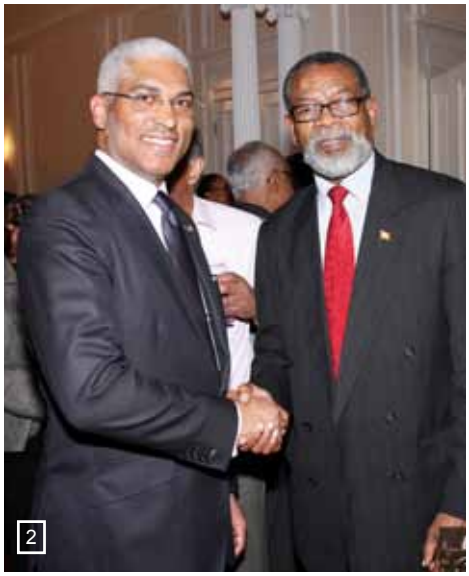
"As High Commissioner, you have exceeded our highest expectations. The size of this crowd tonight is testament to the Diaspora's appreciation of your exemplary leadership." This was the sentiment expressed on Wednesday 26th March, when a crowd of Trinbagonian nationals converged at the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission, London, to bid farewell to their High Commissioner of the past three years, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas.

The nationals personally organised the event for their High Commissioner. As H.E. Nicholas and his wife, Dr. Nicola Alcala, entered the "jam-packed" room to the rousing beats of tassa drums and roaring applause from the audience, it was clear that guests were determined to express their appreciation for the High Commissioner in grand style.

In typical Trinbagonian fashion, nostalgia gave way to a lively atmosphere, as various performers took to the stage to celebrate the High Commissioner's tenure. After a benediction from Canon John Metivier, SSC, the audience was treated to entertainment from nationals including Greta Mendez, who thrilled the crowd with her animated demonstration of "Singing Sandra's True Colours & Poem: Trini Language". Former Mastana Bahar winner, Nigel Rampartap, had guests dancing as he performed his chutney tune "Womaniser", and former UK Soca Monarch Triniboi Joocie got the crowd waving with his song "Beautiful".

Renowned UK-based calypsonian Tobago Crusoe delivered an enthralling performance, as he sung a tune written especially for the High Commissioner, in which he thanked the High Commissioner for his service. Calypsonian Alexander D Great also sang for the High Commissioner, and Brent Holder, the youngest Trinidadian national to be awarded the Member of the Order of the British Empire (MBE), performed soca hits "Happiest Man Alive" and "Too Real" on the tenor pan. The event was indeed a fitting tribute to the High Commissioner, mirroring the numerous cultural events organised by H.E. Nicholas for nationals during his tenure.

In attendance was His Grace Archbishop of Trinidad and Tobago, Reverend Joseph Harris, who had been invited to London by H.E. Nicholas with the objective of calling attention to the restoration efforts for the Cathedral of the Immaculate Conception in Port of Spain, Trinidad.



1) *Emmanuel Pierre, Archbishop Harris, H.E. Nicholas, Canon John Metivier;* ***2)*** *H.E. Nicholas and High Commissioner for Grenada, His Excellency Joslyn Whiteman;* ***3)*** *Dr Alcala receives a gift from Melissa Simon-Hartman;* ***4)*** *Guests enjoy a performance from Triniboi Joocie*

The Archbishop thanked the High Commissioner for supporting the Church's cause and invited all nationals to a special Mass for the Church at Westminster Cathedral on Thursday 27th March, which has been organised by the High Commission.

Delivering the tribute to the High Commissioner was educator and activist, Ansel Wong. "As nationals of Trinidad and Tobago, we cling to things which keep us in touch with home. The Trinidad and Tobago High Commission has become the heart of all things Trinbagonian, and you have been at the centre of it", remarked Mr. Wong. "From being awarded Diplomat of the Year from the Americas to the long list of boards and associations you have participated in, you have lifted the image of Trinidad and Tobago. We are proud of the valuable relations and networks you have built for Trinidad and Tobago with the Diasporas of UK and Europe, the UK Government, international diplomatic community and the business community. Above all we would like to thank you for making the High Commission a welcome haven for all of us nationals".

Nationals presented Dr. Alcala with tokens of their appreciation in the form of flowers and custom jewellery from Melissa Simon-Hartman. The High Commissioner was also presented with gifts from nationals. Ms. Meilin Sancho presented him with an original painting, and thanked him for being so inclusive. "You have made London feel like home, and we will miss you terribly" she said.

The highlight of the evening was the presentation of a special Nationals Award for Service and Leadership to the High Commissioner. Presenting the award, Ms. Sue Sudama thanked the High Commissioner for his exceptional service to the Diaspora. The High Commissioner thanked the nationals profusely and emphasised his appreciation for the connections they had forged over the years. "Together we have worked to give Trinidad and Tobago the respect it deserves on the international stage. Although I am returning home, the Diaspora will always be in my thoughts and I will always try to assist you as much as I can," he said. "I have done much work within the Commonwealth and the international business community, but the work I have done with the Diaspora would have been sufficient to deem my tenure a success".

FEATURE

DIPLOMATIC CORPS HAILS H.E. NICHOLAS FOR LIFTING IMAGE OF TRINIDAD AND TOBAGO

On Monday 31st March, members of the Diplomatic Corps in London, United Kingdom, came together at the Royal Garden Hotel in Kensington to bid farewell to departing Trinidad and Tobago High Commissioner, His Excellency Garvin Nicholas.

Above: *A cross section of the guests that gathered to bid farewell His Excellency Garvin Nicholas.*

Left: *His Excellency thanking the members of the Diplomatic Corps for their support throughout his tenure.*

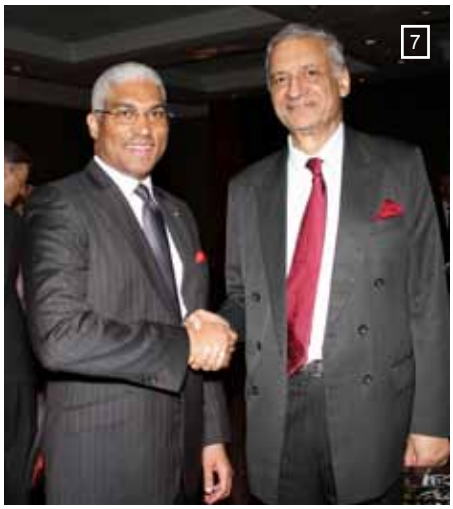
Several dignitaries took to the stage to pay tribute to the High Commissioner, including His Excellency Cenio Lewis, High Commissioner for St. Vincent and the Grenadines and Vice Dean of the CARICOM Corps. High Commissioner Lewis also commended High Commissioner Nicholas for his impact within the CARICOM group, noting that he had raised the image of Trinidad and Tobago and the Caribbean as a whole.

High Commissioner Lewis noted that he had never before seen so much interest surrounding a Caribbean High Commissioner. "You have created such an interest because of the great impact you have made," remarked High Commissioner Lewis. "You have made such an impression because of your tireless work, your energy and the vision you possess. You have that quality to take a vision and make it a reality. The members of the Diplomatic Corps have learned a lot from you".

Also paying tribute was His Excellency Khaled Al-Duwaisan GCVO, Ambassador for Kuwait and Dean of the Diplomatic Corps, who applauded the accomplishments of High Commissioner Nicholas, stating, "This is a High Commissioner who put Trinidad and Tobago on the map within the Diplomatic Corps". Ambassador Al-Duwaisan noted that High Commissioner Nicholas' success was particularly significant as he had entered his first post as a non-career diplomat, yet had taught his peers a great deal. "You have excelled in your objective, and because of your wonderful cultural events we have all learned so much about the warm and friendly people and country of Trinidad and Tobago".

A final tribute was given by Mr. Alistair Harrison, Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps, who lauded the High Commissioner for taking the relationship between the United Kingdom and the Caribbean region to an enhanced level. He also emphasised the significant role High Commissioner Nicholas played in the reform of the United Kingdom's Air Passenger Duty Tax (APD). "I must congratulate you on your success with this venture. You were dedicated to your convictions and pressed hard," stated Mr. Harrison. "This reform has removed a major irritant between our regions and we thank you for the role you have played. It is quite sad to see you leave, we have truly appreciated your leadership".

High Commissioner Nicholas thanked the members of the Diplomatic Corps for their support throughout his tenure, and also issued an appeal for greater cooperation. "In this rapidly evolving world, it is clear that strong diplomatic relations are more important than ever," the High Commissioner stated. "It is imperative that we all stand firmly united so that we may see our dreams for our beloved nations, and indeed the world, come to fruition. We have laid a strong foundation for cooperation and understanding, and we must forge ahead tirelessly in pursuit of the peace and justice we all wish for our world".



1) *A guest greets H.E. Nicholas;* ***2)*** *Mr. Alistair Harrison, Marshal of the Diplomatic Corps pays tribute to H.E. Nicholas;* ***3)*** *H.E. Nicholas with T&T national and actress Ms. Corrine Skinner-Carter;* ***4)*** *H.E. Lewis delives his tribute to H.E. Nicholas;* ***5)*** *Dancers reflect the multicultural society of Trinidad and Tobago;* ***6)*** *H.E. Al-Duwaisan lauds H.E. Nicholas' achievements;* ***7)*** *H.E. Nicholas with H.E. Kamalesh Sharma, Secretary-General of the Commonwealth;* ***8)*** *H.E. Nicholas embraces Baroness Floella Benjamin;* ***9)*** *Brent Holder MBE leads the CSI Steel band;* ***10)*** *Lively African drumming;* ***11)*** *H.E. Nicholas and Dr. Alcala circled by High Commission staff;* ***12)*** *Mr. Deenish Rampatap plays the Tassa drum* ***- Photos by Brian Quaver***

FEATURE

THANK YOU, HIGH COMMISSIONER NICHOLAS

On Friday 21st March, the staff of the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission held a farewell luncheon for His Excellency Garvin Nicholas, who demitted office at the end of March.

All members of the Mission gathered in the High Commission's reception room with H.E. Nicholas seated at the head of the table for a final time. Staff recounted time spent working with the High Commissioner whose passion for Trinidad and Tobago had inspired them to strive towards a high standard of service.

Upon his arrival on 5th December 2010, H.E. Nicholas hit the ground running, determined to fulfil his mandate of advancing Trinidad and Tobago's profile in the international sphere.

In one of his first addresses as High Commissioner, H.E. Nicholas spoke of his intention to enhance bilateral relations between Trinidad and Tobago and the United Kingdom, as well as with the countries to which the Mission is also accredited, namely Germany, Denmark, Sweden, Finland and Norway. He also illustrated his aim to work closely with the countries of the Commonwealth and Latin America in order to position Trinidad and Tobago as a hub for trade and investment. The High Commissioner stated his commitment to promoting Trinidad and Tobago, exploring new initiatives and increasing awareness of Trinidad and Tobago's unique and fascinating culture and landscapes.

High Commissioner Garvin Nicholas with the staff of the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission

Three years later, H.E. Nicholas has made significant strides in advancing these goals. The High Commissioner has displayed an indefatigable dedication to developing Trinidad and Tobago's cultural identity in the UK and beyond, as was evidenced by the groundbreaking Cultural Village in 2012 which exposed masses of international visitors to the culture, history and trade and investment opportunities available in Trinidad and Tobago.

Countless other initiatives of that nature have followed under H.E. Nicholas' leadership, and via his involvement in numerous Commonwealth and other international agencies, as well as direct outreach meetings with members of the UK Government and business community, the High Commissioner has cultivated a distinct identity for Trinidad and Tobago as a premier tourist destination, a rapidly developing nation replete with significant potential for international business investors.

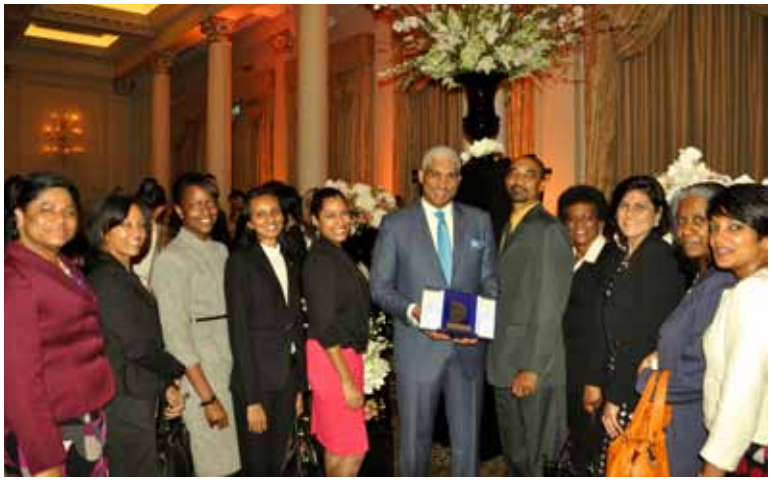
His desire to help his nationals is a trait which significantly contributed to strengthened relations between the Mission and the Diaspora.

As he moves on to a new chapter in his life, the staff of the Trinidad and Tobago High Commission wishes to express our sincere appreciation to His Excellency for a tenure marked by strong leadership and growth. We are confident that whatever your next endeavour will be, it is sure to be of benefit to Trinidad and Tobago. To you and your family, High Commissioner, we wish you the very best.

1) *The High Commissioner raises a toast;* ***2)*** *Mrs. Beverley Awonaya presents HC Nicholas with a gift for Dr. Alcala;* ***3)*** *Ms. Salis Argallon presents HC Nicholas with her custom collage;* ***4)*** *Mrs. Reshma Bissoon-Deokie, Head of Chancery, and Ms. Keisha Rochford-Hawkins, Second Secretary, present HC Nicholas with a photograph of Belgrave Gardens;* ***5)*** *Ms. Rasheeda Morton presents HC Nicholas with a card on behalf of the staff;* ***6)*** *HC Nicholas and the men of the Mission;* ***7)*** *Ms. Gillian Sealy presents HC Nicholas with a gift;* ***8)*** *Mr. Henry Griffiths presents HC Nicholas with a gift;* ***9)*** *Mission staff all smiles on the staircase at 42 Belgrave Square.*

FEATURE

FAREWELL TRIBUTE TO OUR HIGH COMMISSIONER HIS EXCELLENCY GARVIN NICHOLAS 2010 – 2014 PICTORIAL



International Slavery

I am leaving with the knowledge that together, our Mission and our Nationals have achieved exceptional heights over the years. We have advanced the profile of Trinidad and Tobago with our various cultural events and our tourism and trade and investment initiatives. We have shown the world the beauty of our country and ingenuity of our people.

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